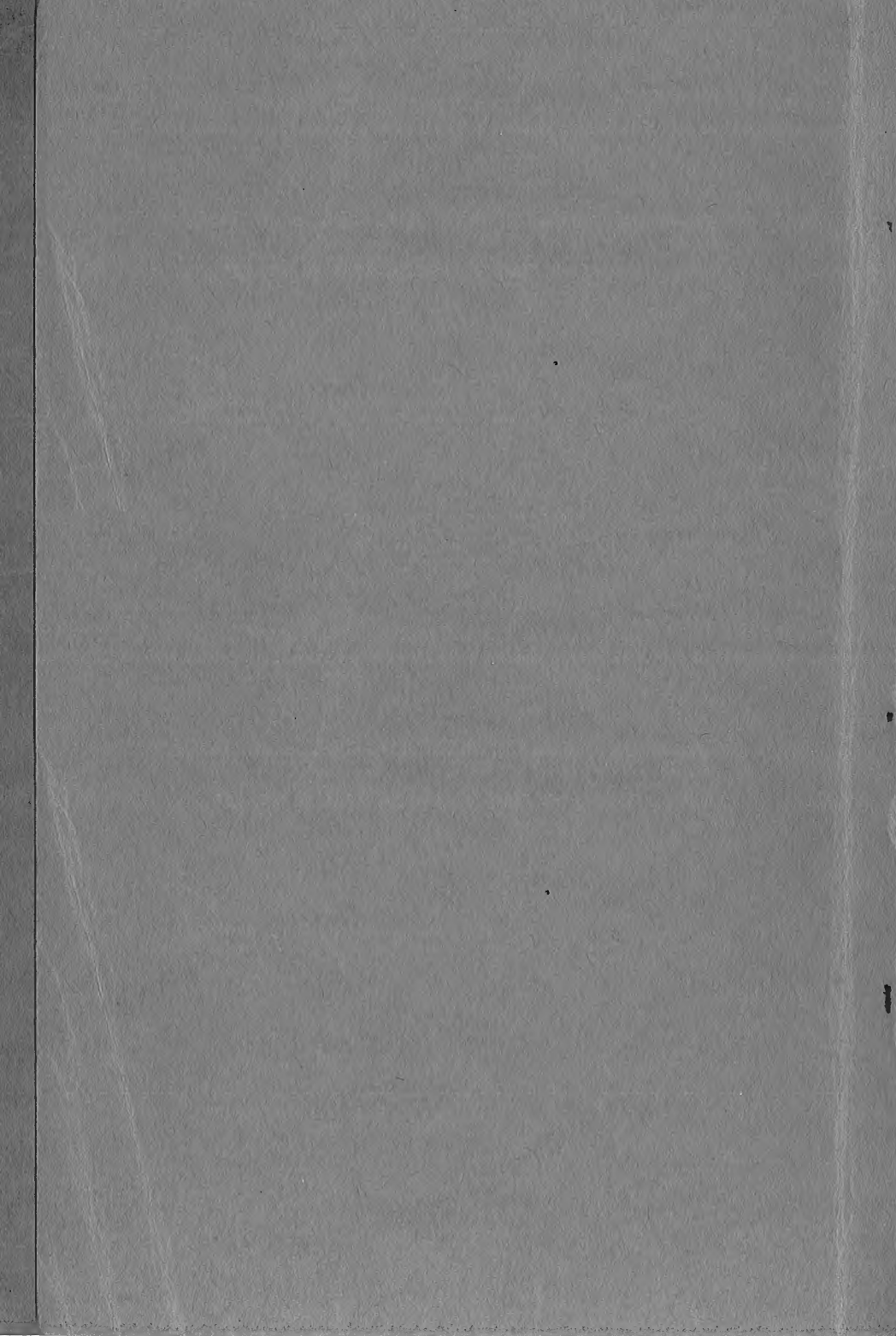


PROCEEDINGS  
*of the first*  
CONFERENCE ON  
MENNONITE CULTURAL  
PROBLEMS

*Including a Summary Report on the*  
CONFERENCE *for* ADMINISTRATORS *of*  
MENNONITE COLLEGES

Held at Winona Lake, Indiana  
August 7 and 8, 1942

I Cultural Conference : 1942



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**PROGRAM FOR THE FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON  
MENNONITE CULTURAL PROBLEMS**

**Winona Lake, Ind., Aug. 7, 8, 1942**

**Friday Evening, August 7, 7:15 p. m.**

**A SUMMARY VIEW OF MENNONITES TODAY**

Chairman: Harold Bender, Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana

Devotional Exercises conducted by Allen Yoder

—Silver Street Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana

Addresses: "The Mennonites in America Today," Henry Fast

—Director of Mennonite Civilian Public Service  
Camps

"European Mennonites As I Saw Them," M. C. Lehman

—Recent Mennonite Central Committee Representa-  
tive in Germany, France and Poland

Open Forum Period

**Saturday Morning Session**

Breakfasts and Morning Devotions 7:15-8:00

**ASPECTS OF CHURCH LIFE AFFECTING THE FUTURE**

Chairman: William Stauffer, Sugarcreek Mennonite Church,  
Sugarcreek, Ohio

"Mennonite Church Architecture and the Simple Life,"

—George Stoneback, Eighth Street Mennonite  
Church, Goshen, Indiana

"The Anabaptist Genius And its Influence on Menno-  
nites"

—By Robert Friedman, Goshen College, Goshen, Ind.

"A Methodology for Studying the Local Community,"

—Winfield Fretz, Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

"The Secularization Process Among Mennonites,"

—Karl Baehr, Graduate Study, University of Chicago

**Afternoon Session 1:30-5:00**

**ASPECTS OF MENNONITE COMMUNITY LIFE**

Chairman: Cornelius Krahn, Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kansas

"Training Girls for Community Nursing Service,"

—Mrs. Ursula Frantz, Mennonite Hospital, Beatrice, Nebraska

"Suggestions for Improving the Small Christian Community,"

—Guy Hershberger, Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana

"Is there a Need for a Mennonite Rural Life Publication?"

—Melvin Gingerich, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas

Dinner Meeting and Business Session 5:30-7:30

**Evening Session 7:30**

**ASPECTS OF CHRISTIAN CONSCIENCE AND THE SOCIAL ORDER**

Chairman: Russell Lantz, Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio

"Mennonite Service Projects in Time of War and Peace,"

—Don Smucker, First Mennonite Church, Wadsworth, Ohio

"Environmental Factors Influencing Decisions of Men of Draft Age,"

—Robert Kreider, Draftee and Educational Director, C.P.S. Camp, Colorado Springs, Colorado

Closing Devotional Services

Thirty minutes is appropriated for the discussion of each topic



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## EXPLANATORY REMARKS

*The Conference on Mennonite Sociology held in Chicago on December 31, 1941, was a forerunner to the Conference on Mennonite Cultural Problems held at Winona Lake in August of 1942. The brief background regarding the origin of both conferences came about in this way. M. C. Lehman while on his way to do relief work for the Mennonite Central Committee in Europe wrote to J. W. Fretz suggesting that a conference be arranged for the late summer of 1942 at which time topics of an economic, sociological, and religious nature pertaining to the Mennonites be discussed. The need for such a conference had long been recognized by numerous other Mennonite leaders but up to that time nothing had been done.*

*A meeting was arranged for the Christmas holidays in Chicago to coincide with the annual meeting of the Mennonite Central Committee and the American Historical Association to which a number of Mennonite leaders were coming. The primary purpose of this conference was to serve as a preparatory meeting for the conference later in the following summer. It was intended to be informal and exploratory.*

*The ready response in terms of attendance and participation in discussion of the topics presented indicated that the time was ripe for such a meeting. There were forty-seven present for the afternoon and evening sessions. At the close of the conference the group unanimously agreed that a future conference should be held. Winfield Fretz was elected executive secretary to work in conjunction with the Mennonite college presidents in setting up the program and in deciding on the time and place of such a conference. This led to the setting up of the Conference on Mennonite Cultural Problems.*

*Subjects for discussion at the Cultural Conference were assigned early in the summer of 1942. Most of those who were invited to present papers had done considerable work and thinking on their subjects previous to the conference. An attempt was made to select representatives for the program from as wide a variety of church backgrounds, college affiliations and geographical areas as possible without sacrificing the highest quality program.*



*The purpose of this conference was to bring together men and women interested in discussing various aspects of Mennonites as a distinct cultural group. At the present rate of secularization Mennonites as a cultural group would undoubtedly become extinct if no efforts were made at preservation. Mennonites would tend to become lost in the larger society through the process of assimilation. There were those who felt that such a loss would be unfortunate and should not occur without at least carefully studying, discussing, and evaluating the essential nature and principles of the group. Evidence on this point is the widespread interest in the conference, set up to discuss problems pertaining to this matter.*

*The term "cultural" used to describe the nature of the conference was chosen advisedly. It was felt to be more inclusive than the term "sociology" which had been the term used at the preliminary session in Chicago. The term, however, has not been adopted as the official name of the conference.*

*Steps to insure a more permanent basis for regular conferences dealing with Mennonite cultural problems were taken by the group at Winona Lake. It was the wish of the group that the Mennonite college administrators, who had just organized into a permanent body the day preceeding the cultural problems conference, appoint a committee of five to be responsible for future conferences.*

*This committee has been appointed and is at work outlining a long-range program. Members of the committee are Dr. Ed. G. Kaufman, Bethel College; Dr. J. S. Schultz, Bluffton, College; Dr. Paul Mininger, Goshen College; Mr. S. L. Loewen, Tabor College; and Dr. Winfield Fretz, Bethel College. It is hoped that this may be the first of a long series of published cultural conference proceedings.*

*—Winfield Fretz, Secretary*

# European Menonites As I Saw Them

*By M. C. Lehman*

NOTE—This is a summary statement of the address given by Dr. Lehman. The comments are taken from the secretary's notes. It was impossible to secure a full copy of the address to include in this record.

Dr. Lehman commented on the numerical distribution of Menonites in Europe and then went on to contrast the thinking and customs of European and American Mennonites. The various influences on the German Mennonites, especially the ideological influences such as the recent influence of the National Socialists, was pointed out. Other historical influences were also mentioned. The address was concluded by outlining what was characterized as "hopes for the future." These hopes included the establishment of a Mennonite cultural center in Europe, possibly Geneva, where relief work could be carried on during the reconstruction period following the war and after that as a center for the conduct of closer relations between Mennonites all over the world.

# The Mennonites in America Today

*By Henry A. Fast*

NOTE—This is a summary of the extemporaneous address delivered by Dr. Fast. The comments are taken from the record of the secretary.

Characteristics of American Mennonites today can be listed under two major headings, namely, assets and liabilities. The characteristics which are assets can also be called "grounds for gratitude." They are that Mennonites are settled by communities, although the communities are widely scattered; Mennonites have a good reputation for hospitality; they have a strong family life and families are usually large and family worship is the rule rather than the exception. Among Mennonites the church is central in the life and activities of the people; Mennonites have always felt a sense of responsibility for the poor, sick, and needy members of the brotherhood; there has always been a strong emphasis on the Jesus way of love and nonresistance; there has been a deep interest in missions, and finally, a genuine interest in the relief of human suffering wherever there were areas of need.

A special ground for gratitude in America should be the present Civilian Public Service program because of its promise of supplying future leadership to the Mennonite Church and we should be thankful for the stability of our churches and our communities in these critical days and grateful for the church's capacity to co-operate in times of crisis.

Those things which have been making an inroad on the more Christian way of life are modern business relations; public school influences; the divisive effect within the church of young people attending a variety of non-Mennonite Bible schools; the failure of Mennonite colleges to emphasize the Mennonite way of life; the loss of a sense of mission on the part of Mennonites; the influence of popular religion; and the loss of a historical consciousness of the Mennonite principles, heritage, and way of life.

# Mennonite Architecture and the Simple Life

*By George Stoneback*

I presume that the papers presented at this conference are supposed to be scholarly dissertations. This paper will not be of that nature. I'm not a scholar, but a preacher—a preacher who is not an authority on Mennonite Church architecture—a field of which I might well say—"They ain't no such animal."

In true preacher style, let me begin with a text—one of the best dated events in the Old Testament—Haggai's first speech which is an effort to arouse the people to rebuild the ruined Temple. He begins by quoting the people's attitude toward the idea. They say that the time has not yet come to rebuild the Temple. To this attitude Haggai objects. "Is it time for you yourselves to live in paneled houses while God's House lies waste?" It is frequently the people who are most careful how their homes are built who are most careless as to how their church building is built or kept in repair. A building is a material thing, it is true, yet the type of building and its condition may be a true barometer of the spirit manifested on the inside. Haggai's people needed encouragement. Haggai knew that a neglected house of worship is one of the most discouraging sights that can greet anyone.

One day Robert Burns went to a church service. He was in need of hope, encouragement, comfort. He did not get it. After he had gone out into the cold wind, someone found these words written in the front of the hymnbook Burns had used:—

As cold a wind as ever blew,  
A colder kirk and in't but few;  
As cold a minister's ever spake—  
Ye'll all be hot ere I come back!

A cold, dilapidated church structure is the appropriate accompaniment for a cold, lifeless service that does not help the few



people who have come for spiritual food.

Let me suggest a few basic principles of architecture and religious architecture in particular.

"The first law of architecture is that every burden must have its due support and every support its due burden. The philosophy arising from this thought was beaten out by Schopenhauer in a famous essay in which he described the column as the symbol of the will to work. 'I am here to hold up this roof' murmurs the column. Every struggling with the forces of gravitation, the column has taken on a measure of the humanity of those who set it to its work. When effort, thought, and emotion are in harmony, the resulting art makes its deepest and most lasting impression. Among the works of man, there is no more perfect evidence of humanity's capacity to subdue matter and master the ever-present forces of gravity than a nobly-planned house in which a god may fitly be worshipped. When the structural forms and proportions of such a building can be related to the experience of the men who devised and fashioned them, a shrine, a temple, or a church is really understood." (Short—"The House of God"—Macmillan, p. 2)

So, then, our first principle is that everything must have a purpose.

Second, let me set down a principle in the words of Elbert M. Conover, director of the Interdenominational Bureau of Architecture;—"Churches must be beautiful." Especially today in America, people, under the stress of war, crave the solace of the spirit of beauty. Evidence of this is the way people flock to Easter dawn services, where a special effort is put forth to make the setting and the service beautiful.

Third, the church building must meet the needs of the congregation. It must be able to combine the best of tradition, symbolism, and modern scientific research. If the seats are not comfortable, if the ventilation is horrible, if it is impossible to hear, people will not want to come. As conservative a man as our beloved Brother Troyer said to me several times—"we supply hard benches, no ventilation or cooling system, drab walls, then we wonder why people go to the movies where they have cushioned seats, controlled air-conditioning, beautiful walls, etc."

Fourth, the church must be worshipful. A properly built church should take even the most indifferent person and make him feel the presence of God. I grant this is a big order, but it is the goal toward which to strive in church architecture.



So much for general principles of church architecture; let us think for a moment on a few of the factors in the Mennonite disposition which is the other pole of our proposition. The Mennonites and their ancestors, the Anabaptists, carried the reformation to its logical conclusion. No temporizing for them! Everything "Romish" had to go. All the liturgical symbolism was external. Religion was an inner matter. So we broke away from all form. Take the matter of baptism, for example. Mennonites were not bound to any form. They immersed, sprinkled, poured. One man was even baptized by pouring water from a milk can! Method was not deemed essential—form was not of value. This same principle went through all our thought and action. Church building could not escape the principle, either. Mennonite church buildings were not called churches, but meeting houses. One day I worked for an Old Mennonite. He asked me what to church I belonged. I said, "I am a Mennonite, too." He replied, "Ich hab gemaint die Stabacha wera Karicha leit." He is right the Stonebacks were Lutherans. Lutherans, etc., the Mennonites called "church people" in contrast with themselves who were, shall we say, "meeting house people"?

Thus the meeting house was simple. There was a beauty about the simple Mennonite meeting house in Pennsylvania, where the Mennonites, like the Quakers and the Church of the Brethren had developed something of a plain uniform type of meeting house. In all too many cases, however; especially in some of the more recent meeting houses, ugliness has become mistaken for simplicity. Call it a meeting house if you will, but what is the purpose of meeting? Not to meet your neighbor, not to settle the politics of the village—but to meet God. The meeting house should help you do this. It should symbolize man's aspirations. Just because the external is unimportant, and because simplicity is desired, is no reason why a church should be ugly. You may say, "I don't need any help to meet God—to get into an atmosphere of worship." But some people do—especially the young people. The trend among the young people is for more symbolism, more form, more liturgy. You can't say—"That's bad—you should not need these helps." That will get us nowhere. Admittedly, we can worship better in the midst of

the beauties of nature than we can on the edge of a city dump. (except, perchance, you might be meditating on the philosophy of history). In our effort to avoid ostentation, I fear we have in effect modeled our church buildings more along the motley principles of a city dump than along the simple lines of the beauty of nature.

As Dr. Fretz suggested in his letter asking me to treat this subject, I am here, not to give answers or solutions, but to make a few suggestions and raise some questions.

I begin with the last aspect considered by most building committees—the setting. The best building suffers if misplaced. Too often the only thought is, which lot is available? Who will give us a free lot? Little thought as to how the meeting house will look on it. A little later I will show you a few pictures showing the effect of setting. City lots cost money, and must be kept as small as possible. That is just another reason why the country is the place to develop a Mennonite style of architecture. Our genius is rural. The simple life is best lived away from “the madding crowd’s ignoble strife”! We have our roots in the soil. A church architecture that symbolizes our heritage must blend in with the good earth. I will show you a few pictures of Mennonite meeting houses which I feel do this very thing.

There is one aspect of the setting to which I must call special attention, namely—the grave yard. In England, where the rural churches are gems of beauty, not always because of the perfection of line in the structure, but because of the setting, you never see a church without its grave yard. Many of the old Pennsylvania meeting houses have their own grave yards. They are an inseparable part of the setting. They help hallow the church by association with the past. I like to go to the Upper Milford Church. It is beautifully set among the hills of eastern Pennsylvania. I love to browse in the old grave yard—for there lie most of my ancestors, the Stauffers. I am in a far better mood for worship after a walk through that cemetery than after a walk down main street of Goshen, Indiana. When you come west, you find the grave yard has become a community or commercial affair—dissociated from the local church. Every man I bury in Goshen must be taken several miles away from the

church, up or down main street—to the city cemeteries. This is just another break from the past with its dignified, hallowed memories that lead us to worship.

I turn next to the steeple, tower, belfry, or what do you wish to call it? This is the most noticeable aspect of many church buildings. A tower is one of the most important features which distinguishes a church instantly from a commercial building or a home. "Every church ought to have a tower, if a good one can be afforded." (Webber, "The Small Church"—Jansen p. 191). This is the architectural principle on towers. My question is—does this apply to Mennonite architecture that would symbolize the simple life? The chief purpose of a tower is to provide for a bell or bells. Mennonites were not allowed at times to call people to their church service by means of bells, and out of our restrictions, I think we have developed a feeling that bells do not belong on a Mennonite church. Possibly this is correct. Personally, I like bells and towers. Bells give voice to the call of the Church of Christ—"Come unto me all ye that labor." The tower symbolizes the aspirations of man, shall I say they are fingers that point upwards to God? The New England church is almost as severely plain as a Mennonite meeting house. I was rebuked when I suggested a cloth on the table in front of the pulpit in the New England church which I served one winter. "Apart from the steeple there is scarcely a trace of Christian symbolism\*" (in the New England church). If this is the case, possibly we would not do violence to the principle of the simple life if we put a bell and tower on the church. It is a moot question.

Where we have put towers on Mennonite churches, we have made terrible mistakes. I will show you these mistakes later. I have yet seen only one Mennonite tower that did not violate the basic principles of a good church tower.

Those principles:

the tower must not be thin, spindly looking.

the tower must not be stuck in one corner, so that it forms one corner of the church building proper.

the tower should project its full area from the building.

to fit in with our first principle of a functional nature, every tower must have a bell otherwise it is victorian show.

As you walk from the grave yard and look at the steeple (if any)

\*Drummond, *The Church Architecture of Protestantism*. T. & T. Clark, p. 54.

you next look for the door. Here is where many churches fail. One Mennonite Church says "Welcome" in the gingerbread in the peak of the front cornice, yet you have to climb ten steps to get in. On an icy day there is no welcome there for grandmother. Look at the pictures of our Western Mennonite churches—see how many sin in this respect. Contrast this with the one low step of the better of the Pennsylvania meeting houses. One look tells the difference in the feeling of welcome. The New England churches have only two to three steps at the front door.

What about the floor plan? The best for practical purposes, sound effects, giving feeling of worship, etc., is the rectangular plan with a ratio of 2 to 5. If it gets wider than that you get a box. If the length gets to be twice the width, you have a barn. Some suggest 1 to 3 is better than 2 to 5. Too many of our churches were built in the era when we made auditoriums instead of churches. The benches are bent around the big square room, with the preacher and the pulpit lost in one corner. The preacher gets a stiff neck trying to give a look in every general direction as often as possible, and half the people cannot hear very well.

What about windows? General principles of church architecture demand windows so high that the seated worshiper cannot look out at the sights on the street, or else colored glass to serve the same purpose. I rather think that these general principles hardly apply for our ideal Mennonite church which expresses the simple life. I like a rose window. I like the Good Shepherd window and the Light of the World window at the Bluffton Church; but plain stained glass that paints no picture, I fear has no functional value. This is especially true of a rural church. No real New England church has stained glass windows. The glass is clear—affording a soul inspiring view of the rolling hills. As though man's colored glass could help me worship better than God's green hills! I have never felt in a better mood for worship than I have in the Old Flatland Church and the West Swamp Church of eastern Pennsylvania. I can still recall the scenes from those clear glass windows—the trees, the hills beyond, in the summer the fragrance of the mown hay—the joyful song of a lark that came through the open window. A piece of yellow glass beside a green piece of glass can't do half as much for me! And now I am told that the West Swamp Church went high hat and shut out that view of the rich farm land with stained glass windows!



The type of windows I would put in my ideal Mennonite church makes the setting already mentioned doubly important. It is important for external and internal appearance.

Personally, I like an organ. Its sustained harmony is conducive to worship. There should be a law against throwing away the old reed organ and replacing it with the hard-sounding piano. If you can't have a pipe organ or an electric organ, for worship's sake—hang on to your old organ and don't get a piano. If the congregation can sing like the one at Goshen College—I doubt whether an organ is indispensable.

My big problem is with the pulpit platform, for we cannot call it a chancel in a Mennonite church. I do not know what to do with it. The Lutheran in me cries out for an altar at the center—putting the pulpit and the preacher where they belong—at one side. The altar symbolized the idea of sacrifice—that speaks of the great sacrifice, the Christ of Calvary—the love of God behind it. Yet, I feel that a pulpit on one side and reading desk on the other with an altar in the center hardly fits into a simple Mennonite church. What should be the focal point in a Mennonite church?

Should there be a plain blank wall behind a long pulpit? Should there be a choir loft behind the preacher? Should there be a chancel bay with a window or two? I am not sure. This is one of the big questions I raise this morning. Of one thing I am fairly certain, if you have a choir, I would put it on the balcony in the rear. The organ should be there too. That way you can get the devotional help of a choir without the distraction, show, and concert hall effect of an anthem or solo.

Well, there are a few principles—suggestions, and questions. I would like to see some trained architect and engineer who is steeped in the Mennonite tradition develop a truly Mennonite church style that embodies the best of the past tradition with the best modern achievement to produce a truly worshipful church that would symbolize our simple life. This would require discrimination. We are inclined to fail in this respect. We cannot disengage the passing from the permanent. Let me illustrate this in the matter of furniture. When I bought our furniture, I tried as much as my purse would allow to buy period style furniture. My living room suite is eighteenth century American. That will always be in good taste. But suppose I had bought one of these over-fed modern living



room suites. In a few years it would be hopelessly out of date. It would be definitely "dated." It is a passing style. The same is true of a home. I can take you down a street and tell you within a few years the date of the average house; dated, every one. But let me come to a true Cape Cod, Berkshire, Salt Box, or Georgian home, and it is not dated. It is a lasting style—whereas the others with their gingerbread, oval glass windows, uncovered rafters, flat, sagging roofs, sweeping down over the porch, and I can say, gay nineties, 1915 to 1922, or what have you, old but not beautiful, passed—passing.

The same holds true of church architecture. No matter how the community changes, the church should remain the same. It should have a beauty that is always beautiful for it is the church of Jesus Christ who is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

I say I would like to see one man develop a good Mennonite church style. That would not be enough. No ministerial student should get a diploma until he has mastered the basic principles of church architecture, especially as related to the Mennonite church. If any of you men are on the seminary board, there is something to think about.

Now I want to take you on a high speed trip around the world, looking at a few Mennonite churches in various lands, showing that there is no Mennonite style that is uniform, but that the culture affects the style. Then I want to look more in detail at a few Mennonite churches to point out our bad spots and finally to show a few good ones.

# The Anabaptist Genius and its Influence on Mennonites Today

*By Robert Friedman*

American Mennonitism of today does not find itself in a crisis. But the world around it does; and it is a crisis more catastrophic than any other one in history. No one knows what the future might have in store for Mennonitism. Most likely there will be trying times ahead, times of decision in which people will waiver. Some will stick loyally to the "faith of the fathers" in the face of temptations and dangers; others, however, will adjust themselves to a changing world and will justify it with good arguments. In a situation such as that it might be good to stop for a moment and devote a few thoughts to a self examination and a consideration about that which one could call the genius or the essence of Mennonitism. What is that "old" spirit of the fathers? And is it worth while preserving?

Is Mennonitism just a Protestant denomination like most of the others plus the non-resistant article, or does Mennonitism distinguish itself within the Protestant family by a particular message to the world? Does Mennonitism of today still have some ties with sixteenth century Anabaptism from which it derives and are Mennonites ready to accept and recognize these ties? Or is this heritage spiritually dead and would it be better to accept the standards of the present Christian world? These are questions of heavy responsibility which need thorough clarification. Perhaps a historian is in a position to contribute a little to this end.

Let us first have a look at the distant past, namely on Anabaptism of the sixteenth century and its genius. When the Reformers broke with the old Roman church they went a certain distance in the right direction. Everybody rejoiced: the Bible had become again the center of Christianity. But they stopped halfway, and the Reformation with its state churches and all that is implied

in that fact became the great disappointment of many seekers for a true Christianity. They wanted not only the first step but also a true brotherhood of the reborn as a nucleus in a heathen world. They wanted a Christian church in the proper sense of the word. So they ventured the hard and narrow way of non-conformity to the "world" that is a consistent life of earnest discipleship of Christ. It became in fact a "Christian revolution." A simple, un-theological biblicism prevailed and gave the solid foundation. The brethren did not speak so much about salvation or justification by faith (although they believed in both), they did not use the Paulinic language as the Reformers mostly did, their primary concern was the keeping of the commandments of Christ, or to say it in one word, *obedience*. Without obedience, simple and untwisted, there cannot be discipleship. *Faith* is no private matter of unrelated individuals, faith exists only as far as it leads to evidencing in life. The brethren, as they called themselves, tried to follow two great principles, well known to every Christian, but rarely actualized in history: *Love* and the *Cross*. The Anabaptists understood obedience of true discipleship consisting of nothing but these two principles which were very little taught in the official churches. Love leads to brotherhood, to a close and permanent fellowship which is unknown in the world at large, while the Cross is the unavoidable consequence of such contradiction to the world as it was taught by Christ. Of course, the cross must never be sought for its own sake, but will inevitably be faced by those who do not compromise in things which matter.

Thus was the gist or core of the Anabaptist teachings, this the character of the small flock which challenged the world of the sixteenth century. It meant a warning cry to the conscience of all who confessed Christ. And it was obvious from the beginning that the *world* would not allow this challenge. Its dynamite was distinctly felt and wholesale persecution began immediately. It is a confirmed fact that these persecutions were not prompted by the fear that Anabaptists are politically dangerous—this boggy was nothing but a propaganda devise. The authorities knew very well from hundreds of trials that the brethren were strictly non-resistant and ready to suffer for the sake of their peace conviction. They were persecuted because the *world* did not want this stirring up of the deepest layers of conscience, in short, the world

did not permit the challenge.

Anabaptism became a *suffering church* (this word was for the first time used in the famous letter of Conrad Grebel to Thomas Müntzer, 1524), and the well-known *Martyrs' Mirror* by Th. van Braght (1660) is its most adequate representation. It remains true in all times that suffering, born with the right frame of mind, is the most efficient weapon in the spiritual fight of mankind. "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church" (Tertullian, about 200 A. D.). One could quote passage after passage from the (printed) Hutterite *Chronicle* to prove this thesis. More than once the constables, jailers and hangmen, occupied in Anabaptist hunting, changed mind and life after witnessing such testimonies. And I could tell stories of today how these records of old still were able to strike hardboiled freethinkers and contemporaneous unbelievers and made them listen to the subtle voice of their conscience mostly well covered up by prejudices and conventional opinions. Anabaptism was by and large the most efficient revival of early Christianity in history. As such it would have fulfilled its function even if it had died out.

With the Thirty-Years-War things changed thoroughly. Most of the old group life was destroyed, many turned cooler to the high standards of former days, persecution almost resulted in extermination, and the movement disappeared after a century of existence in many parts of the German speaking countries. In the North, in Holland and in the cities of Hamburg and Danzig, the brethren became gradually respected and well-settled citizens, living in close contact with the world and its riches. They became urban and liberal and changed unconsciously the original pattern against far reaching compromises. Their Christianity, though of high moral standard, became more of the denominational type, and they called themselves now Mennonites or Doopsgezinde (Baptist minded). Only in the remote valleys of Switzerland where the Thirty-Years-War did not reach, the brethren continued in the old way and remained loyal to their heritage longer than anywhere else. Extremely hard persecutions made them eventually leave their beloved home country around 1700. They settled partly in the Palatinate and Alsace, adopting now also the name *Mennonites*, partly they came over to colonial Pennsylvania, to preserve what seemed to be worth preserving.

But step by step the new time and its new spiritual climate did not fail to influence these groups in which the original enthusiasm of past centuries had faded out long ago. The old biblicistic Christianity—as far as it had not turned to a mere stiff formalism—gave way to an emotionalism of thoroughly different character. It was the warm but rather sentimental and subjective general Protestantism of the eighteenth century, known in history as *Pietism*, which decisively influenced the Mennonite groups everywhere. No doubt that this new movement had its great values in reviving a genuine Christian feeling in the face of a sterile orthodoxy. However, although Pietism was in many points similar to the old Anabaptism—above all in its untheological, practical attitude—it was yet something essentially different. One can easily notice this difference by the changed reaction of the worldly authorities. Persecutions of Pietists were but a rare exception and if at all, were executed in the mildest way. There was no challenge any more to be crushed.

If it is allowed to epitomize this intricate and partly hidden anthesis between Anabaptism (Mennonitism) and Pietism in a short syllabus, these might be its main points:

#### ANABAPTISTS

Imitation of Christ: discipleship; obedience and martyrdom;

The "bitter Christ";

Godfearing ("Gottesfurcht")

A closely knit brotherhood in which the individual remains mostly anonymous;

A stern and austere frame of mind;

Non-conformity.

#### PIETISTS

Experience of one's own sinfulness, conversion, enjoying the state of grace, and edification in it;

The "sweet Christ";

Godliness ("Gottseligkeit")

A group of redeemed individuals turning more and more to a denominational type of church;

Emotionalism;

Peace with the world.



This was the situation faced by the brethren everywhere. Great was the temptation to yield to the easier way offered which nevertheless was Christian and in many regards akin to the original one of the fathers. People did not recognize the differences and were all too quickly ready to accept the new and warm message of salvation as an actual status of life, as a possession or a gift to be enjoyed right now after having passed the required struggle for repentance. But by that they lost sight of the fact that salvation means in human life but a functional force, a task, a far end, and cannot be anything static. Pietism in all its shades meant no more irritation of the world but peace within it. Instead of the brotherhood of primitive Christianity, one cherished now pious conventicles, or as it was occasionally called, the "*ecclesiola in ecclesia*" (the little church within the church.) A mild morality, although including many charitable activities, replaced the all overwhelming force of genuine Christian love. A new type of devotional literature emerged, mostly non-Mennonite, which was eagerly read and which almost completely displaced the older readings of the brethren. The influence of the changed situation was stronger than the heritage of old.

As time went on and the impact of the new (nineteenth) century with its technological progress developed, the inner situation among Mennonites, both in America and Europe, changed still further. On the one side the church grew more and more toward denominationalism of the moderate revivalistic pattern. On the other side toward a liberal organization which no longer could withstand the tide of "secularization" or, as I should prefer to call it, "conformity with the world," camouflaged somewhat by the upkeeping of certain traditional forms. In either case one gave up the old, primitive Christian pattern, and was not even aware of it.

It cannot be the task of the student of history to preach or indicate means of reorientation. All that history can do is to point to certain facts and by this make one conscious of a given situation. This might arouse more vigilance and incite a new readiness for a re-examination of the Christian's function in the world. In times of spiritual stagnation there is one great danger; self-illusion or self-deceit. One takes routine

work for essential work and thinks he is promoting the Kingdom of God by rather external means. Thus, a reconsideration of the heritage of the fathers seems to be highly necessary particularly in a time as trying as this.

The concern of the writer in raising this question is prompted by the words of Jesus: "If the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted?"

# A Methodolgy for Studying the Local Community

*By Winfield Fretz*

If the Christian church is to be a vital, growing constructive, organization for the purpose of promoting the Kingdom of God it will be necessary for her to understand herself. She must have a clear-cut vision of her task. She must know her assets and her liabilities and she must know by what methods she is going to seek the realization of her purpose.

The same rigid requirements are demanded of every component part of the total Christian Church. We are especially concerned with that numerically small, but spiritually great counterpart, the Mennonite Church. If the Mennonite Church is going to make a significant contribution to the cause of the Kingdom she too must be a vital, growing, and constructive organization. But she cannot be a dynamic vitalizing agency unless she understands her own genius. That is, what by nature of her heritage is she best qualified to contribute as her part in the task of making our human world more Christian? In order to plan for the future it is necessary to understand the present. What are the assets and the liabilities; the advantages and the disadvantages with which we now must work? In order to satisfactorily answer these questions it is necessary to inquire still further and ask how these things and conditions came to be. That is, we must examine our history to know where we started, what were the aims of those who went before us and finally, what were the good and the bad roads on which our predecessors journeyed?

All of this amounts to one general or over-all demand, namely, that of taking an inventory or a stock account of our cultural heritage. In the language of modern social science it is called making a social survey of a cultural group. In the past Mennonites have not been

given to much critical self-examination and certainly not to thorough scientific social investigations of their institutions, customs and ways of life. Such a task waits to be done. The institutions of the family, the neighborhood, the local community and even the ideals and the principles of the Mennonite Church should be carefully reexamined, rethought and possibly restated in the light of past history, present conditions and future needs.

Such a task is not a one-man job nor even a short-time project for many men. It requires the best energies of numerous devoted individuals over a considerable period of time, indeed, in one respect, it is a constantly on-going process that requires the best thinking of the wisest men in every age. If eternal vigilance is the price of liberty then too it is the price of spiritual fervor and religious integrity.

What needs to be done is easier to point out than is a method of doing it. If there is general agreement among us that a broad survey ought to be made of the Mennonite Church the question still remains as to how it is going to be done and who is going to do it? For the purpose of trying to answer this question I propose in this paper a series of suggestions on the general subject of methodology. As the topic of my discussion indicates this is a methodology for the study of the local community. The underlying assumption of this methodology is that we cannot study the whole Mennonite Church at once but that we must study her in piecemeal fashion, one community at a time. Medical men do not begin their study of a disease in general but confine themselves to the careful and minute diagnosis of individual cases and then when enough individual cases have been studied general laws or conclusions are formed. So too do we propose to begin by studying The Mennonite Church. It is our hope that where enough individual units are studied certain generalizations in the form of conclusions can be stated.

The following suggestions are submitted with the express purpose of subjecting them to free discussion and constructive criticism in the hope that the net result will be a more valuable methodology on how to study the local Mennonite community. This methodology may then be used by different groups in different parts of the country and the results of each study can serve as a basis of comparison because the techniques of procedures are the same. In this way a valid total

picture may eventually be built up.

The chief purpose of this survey is to discover an actual picture of the sociology of American Mennonitism. This requires the study of representative communities of all branches and all geographical areas of the Mennonite Church ranging from the most liberal to the most conservative and from the most densely populated to the most sparsely settled and most isolated communities. The results of such studies should have immense practical value both immediate and ultimate for the local community as well as for the total communion of the Mennonite Church. A few of these values might be mentioned here: It would help people know their own community as they had never known it before; it would help them see trends in the directions toward which they have been moving; it would enable them to plan more effectively for the future; it would permit communities to compare and contrast themselves with similar communities of other areas; it would reveal certain weaknesses and disadvantages which should be eliminated and finally it would enable Mennonites to make an intelligent evaluation of the way they are exercising stewardship over their God-given heritage. All of these are things which far-sighted Christian leaders will desire to know in order that wise and courageous guidance may be given during the strenuous days ahead.

In studying Mennonite communities one should always remember that, from the sociological point of view, he is studying a cultural group. This means a concentration of persons who have a common material and social heritage, common beliefs, habits, activities, interests and social organization. The culture group completely encompasses the thinking, feeling and acting of its members<sup>1</sup>. The group is, however, not an end in itself. It is only a means whereby individual ends are attained. In the group the individual purposes, wishes, aspirations, and needs originate, grow and are realized. "Human life is group life." The breadth and depth of an individual's life depends very largely on the quality and the perspective of the social organization of which he is a part. The larger secular society is just beginning to recognize this fact. Mennonites and other cultural groups have long demonstrated it. Since, then, Mennonites are a cultural group we must use a methodology for studying them that is peculiarly appropriate and fitted for cultural groups. The term culture is used throughout this paper to mean the sum total of social

1. Pauline V. Young, *Scientific Social Surveys and Research*. N. Y., 1939 Prentice Hall Inc. p. 414.



heritages, ideas, habits, customs, attitudes, values, morals, law, art, religion, inherited skills, material goods and technical processes particularly as it pertains to the Mennonite people.

In making community studies four general avenues of approach have been developed by students of social science. The four methods are called the historical, the ecological, the statistical, and the case study. These methods are not exclusive of each other but may all be supplementary to each other. In making studies of Mennonite communities we shall have to make use of all four methods. We want to know something of the past of our communities, something of their spiritual relations and interactions, something of their external characteristics, activities, and problems from the statistical standpoint, and something of their individual life histories, social processes and social attitudes as revealed in the individual case study method.

A word should be said about the qualifications of the persons who undertake community studies. A good deal of the work such as collecting material can be done by amateurs who have had very little or no training providing they work under the careful supervision of a trained individual. The person directing the community study, however, should be familiar with the field of social investigation and with the techniques of social research. This is necessary for the sake of efficiency and for the sake of securing the maximum value from the study. Unless there is expert supervision the inexperienced individuals often become discouraged with the project; they may become easily confused with the mass of details and give up the entire task as a hopeless job. The well trained person knows the value of the numerous questions and answers and sees into what particular phase of the study these various bits of information fit. Many of the questions asked will seem unnecessary to the novice in this field. He will think many of the details are entirely unrelated to the major points of the study and will be tempted to overlook them and search for big things but the social investigator and research student has discovered over years of experience that the slightest remarks and the smallest items of information are frequently clues to the solution of the biggest problems. All individuals selected to help in making a community study should be interested in the study, dependable workers and accurate in the recording of their information.

#### *The Methodology*

The general plan for a community study calls for the following

steps. 1. The determination of the natural area or a definition of the boundaries of the community to be studied. 2. A recording of one's first impressions of the community or a personal account if one is already familiar. 3. The collection and classification of the existing data. 4. The social history of the area. 5. The accommodations of the group to the general customs and mores of society. 6. Life histories of representative members of the group. 7. Documentation of the materials, and 8. The analysis and interpretation of the observations and the collected data.

The first step in the study of a Mennonite community is to determine exactly what constitutes the community or the natural area. Natural areas are not the result of plan or design; they are very seldom identical with political boundaries, but rather come into existence as a part of a dynamic, emerging pattern of community growth. The concept of natural area should not be applied too rigidly because it is frequently very difficult to define the boundaries of a natural area. This is especially true in a heavily settled area of Mennonites where there is actual over-lapping of community influence and activities. Mennonite areas such as Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Wayne County, Ohio and McPherson County, Kansas illustrate this point very clearly. In making community surveys the boundaries of each community are frequently drawn arbitrarily based on such information as to what the local people consider their shopping center and their social and religious center of activity. Natural barriers such as rivers, hill, mountains or forests are often effective boundaries, so too are railroads, highways and the settlement of other ethnic or religious groups. In cases where the latter situation pertains the process of Mennonite invasion and succession often makes the matter of boundaries all the more difficult to determine. For this reason it should be remembered that natural areas are not static and fixed but are dynamic and ever changing. Boundaries may be drawn for the sake of convenience but their arbitrary nature should be recognized.

A second step in making a community study is the recording of one's first impressions of the general nature and characteristics of the community. Even if one is fairly familiar with the area it should be done for purposes of comparison later on and for the sake of becoming more objective in his study of the community. This procedure will prove very valuable as a source of hypotheses and clues

for further investigation. The findings in this part of the study are confined very largely to externals. Such impressions as striking physical characteristics, types of residences, conditions of buildings and streets, the centers of trade, the transportation facilities, the attitude toward strangers, the language spoken on the street and the general economic conditions as revealed by external appearances are all factors worthy of note in recording one's first impressions of a Mennonite community.

The collection and classification of data is the third step to be undertaken in making a community study. Whatever material is collected should be gathered as impartially as possible. Gathering data and records to prove or strengthen some preconceived notions should be avoided. Likewise, one should be extremely careful not to "read into" a document or a record one's own thinking. As to the sources of data for a community study one can cite many different possibilities. There are first of all the sources in literature both contemporary and historical. These will provide information regarding the background of the Mennonites prior to their coming to America, accounts of their arrival in this country and descriptions of significant activities in their life at present. In addition to the literary sources are the results of official investigations such as the census materials compiled by federal, state and municipal governments; there are also official reports of public welfare agencies, county ordinances, housing and education reports which may all yield helpful data.

Unofficial investigations such as reports of civic, social and special groups often contain a good deal of valuable information. Newspapers, magazine articles, written records of old settlers, documents, personal letters and diaries are all sources of information worthy of consideration when in search of light that will help one understand a particular community. The study of community maps and directories when available are also valuable sources of information. In addition to all of the written documents and records there is of course the large area of the unwritten field. This information must be gathered through one of various ways such as the personal interview, participant observation, correspondence, the questionnaire, schedules and scoring devices of one kind or another.

In recording data the primary and secondary sources should always be clearly differentiated and a systematic method of note taking

should be observed. A standard size sheet of paper should be used and only one fact, theme or idea recorded on a single sheet. The importance of this fact cannot be over estimated. It aids in classification and reclassification of data and it enables the social investigator to break up, isolate, and examine a complex set of ideas in their component parts and later again to combine them into other groupings to discover new relationships. If notes are carefully and systematically kept the information can quickly be glanced through and the data checked by other interested individuals. In classifying the data it is well to make a bibliography in which the sources of information are recorded as well as the names of significant persons, institutions and organizations involved in the study. It is well in this connection to keep a list of suggestions for further study such as new problems and new hypotheses that might have arisen. Of course careful distinctions should always be made between quoted excerpts, abstracts, first hand personal observations and information obtained from interviews.

The fourth step in the study of the local community is the investigation and description of its natural history. Under this category would come an account of the various settlements. Questions such as the following should be answered: Who were the early settlers, where did they come from and why did they leave? Did all of the early settlers come from the same community? What occupations did they follow before coming and after arriving? Why did these people settle here in preference to other areas? What institutions did they bring along and what new ones did they develop? What were characteristic customs, moral ideals, community interests, types of family life, neighborliness, traditions, ceremonies and religious beliefs? Do the children of the early settlers live in this area or have they moved out? These and other items of information would help reveal the natural history of particular communities.

The fifth step in the study and closely related to the previous one is that of the accommodation of the group to the general customs and mores of society. Through the use of interviews, observation, consultation of diaries and the records of local organizations one could begin to get information on the accommodation and assimilation processes. One would want to know what changes have taken place and are now taking place and whether these changes are rapid or gradual. These cultural adaptations can often best be observed by

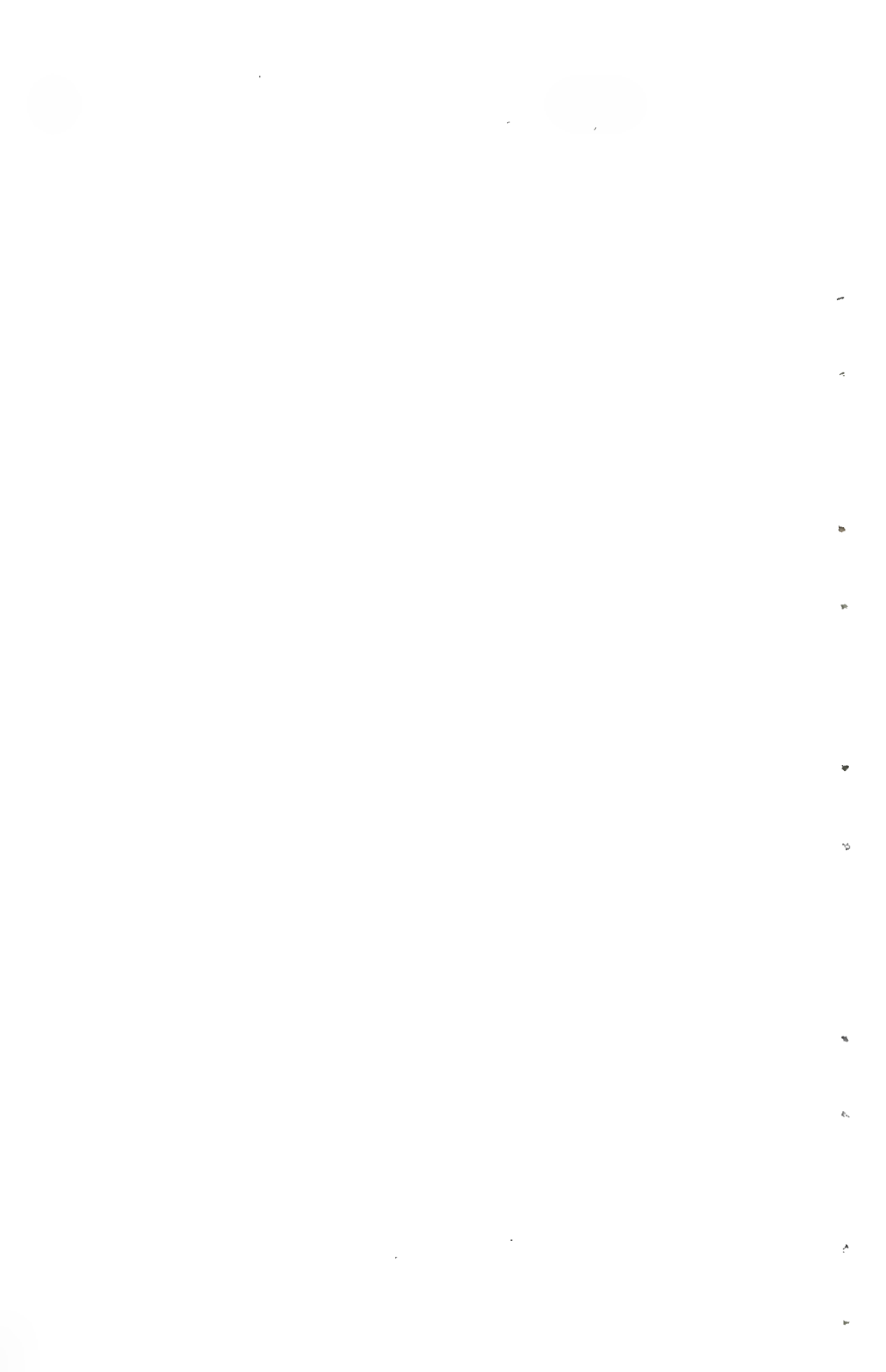


comparing and contrasting the second and third generation settlers with the first generation pioneers. A study of the customs, the living habits and the language used in each generation will be very revealing. The attitudes toward education are likewise significant indices toward the accommodation process. The recording of life histories of representative members of the community, especially life-long residents, is extremely informative. This is one of the most effective ways of supporting statistical data and putting a personal note of warmth into it.

The sixth step in the work of studying a community is that of proper documentation of the material collected. The full particulars of this step cannot be enumerated here. It must suffice to say that a good document when it is complete should have some of the following qualities: It should possess uniformity so that all documents can be quickly compared. A statement of fact concerning the informant and the conditions under which the document was secured should be included so that it can be quickly evaluated. The document should of course be accurate and should contain the investigators own criticism. Other data such as the name of the study, the name of the investigator, the name of informants, the topics and phases of the study covered in this particular document, the date of the interview, the conditions under which the information was secured and the labeling of confidential material so that it can be adequately protected, should all be included in proper documentation.

The final steps in the study of a local community are the most difficult. Contrary to popular opinion, the most difficult thing in a community study is not the collection of data. The most difficult part of the study is the skillful analysis and proper interpretation of the material gathered. It is at this stage where the mass of data must be carefully sorted and put into its proper place. The unimportant material must be eliminated and the important findings interpreted and restated in the light of the total study. It is here that the basic problems that were asked at the beginning of the study must be answered. An intelligent use and interpretation of the materials collected should reveal the true nature of the local Mennonite community to itself. As a result of such an impartial and objective study a community's weakness and strength should be clearly revealed. It is at this point where consecrated Christian church and community leaders could begin planning and developing programs for the future.



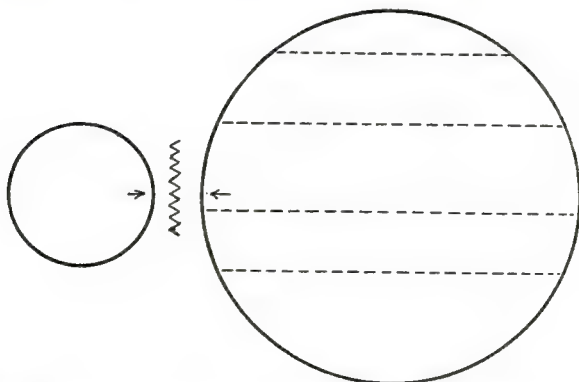


# The Secularization Process Among Mennonites

*By Karl Baehr*

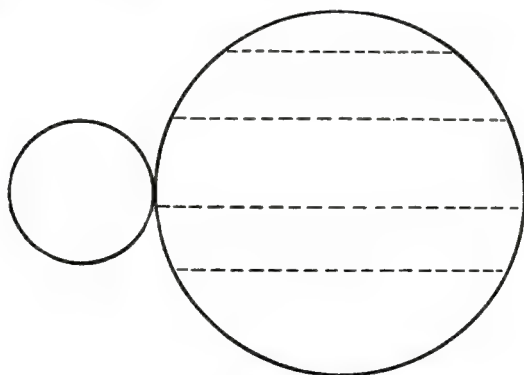
In order to clarify the secularization process that has been going on among the Mennonites in history and in Elkhart County, Indiana, the following sociological description in the form of diagrams has been prepared.

Figure 1 shows the Mennonite sect in conflict with the larger society. Interaction is characterized by persecution and bloodshed. This bitter conflict drives the sect into isolation. It seeks a habitat that will make it self-sufficient. Farming becomes the chief occupation because it is best adapted to provide a minimum of contact with the world and a maximum of self-sufficiency. Other trades and functions necessary to create a stable farming community are developed within the group. Isolation devices are spontaneously created—distinctive dress, prohibition against marriage outside the sect, etc. No class lines exist in the sect. It is homogeneous; each person has equal rights, privileges, and duties. The larger society is stratified into numerous classes.



*Figure 1—The sect in conflict with the larger society*

In Figure 2, overt conflict has ceased and the Mennonites are granted formal religious freedom—they become tolerated—and are ceded the right to exist. As a result the Mennonites and the larger society move closer together.



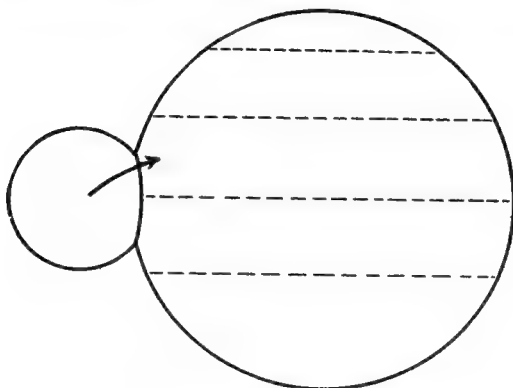
*Figure 2—Tolerance*

What contact exists is casual and grounded in suspicion. The sect is still self-sufficient. It is socially and economically independent of the larger society. It is homogeneous and at this stage finds little that is attractive outside of its walls of isolation.

The two societies, in Figure 3, have moved together, and some forms of interaction are taking place among a few of the members of each group. Such interaction is largely confined to economic or business dealings. The peace which toleration brought has helped the sect to prosper. It has produced abundant crops. The larger society becomes a market for the surplus commodities produced by the sect. The reputation of these commodities spreads and the larger society seeks more and more trade relations with the sect. The relationship becomes symbiotic.

The sect is still homogeneous, although the standards and business mores of the larger society are beginning to invade the sect. The incipient stages of conflict between those who approve and those who disapprove of these new ways are present within the sect. The sect begins to discover that it now must begin to enforce its adopted isolation devices.

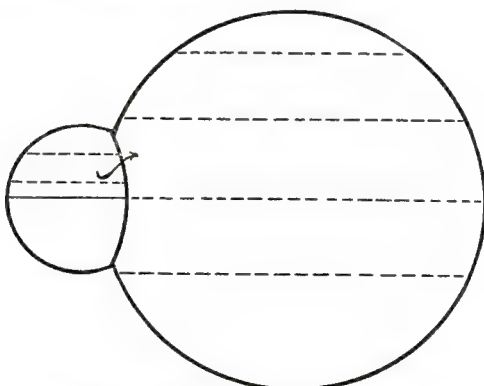
The sect and the larger society have moved closer together in Figure 4. Interaction is becoming more frequent and intense.



*Figure 3—First state of interaction*

Conflict between the standards and practices of the sect and those of the larger society, as adopted by a section of the sect, has resulted in dividing the sect into two bodies, "conservatives," and "liberals." Thus, whereas conflict formerly existed between the sect and the larger society, now conflict is present within the sect, causing splits to occur.

The liberals begin to deal with others in the sect on the basis of the principles and practices adopted from the larger society. Again this is most noticable in the realm of business and economics—rent, interest, mortgages, foreclosures, and wages. Dress regulations are modified or dropped. The enforcement of all the isolation devices is relaxed.



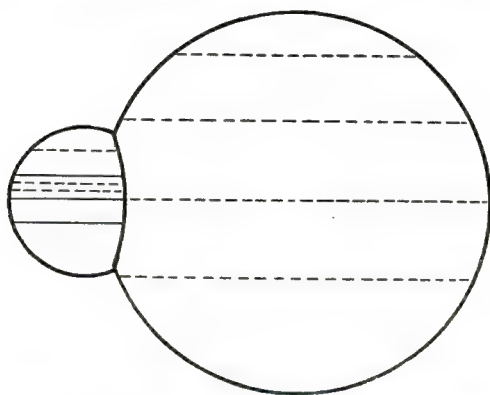
*Figure 4—Second stage of interaction*

The imitation of the business practices of the larger society tends to divide the liberal group into "haves" and "have-nots"; into employer and employee. Thus, the stratification of the larger society begins to appear within the liberal sect-group.

The conservatives remain homogeneous. They maintain the the pure sect characteristics and enforce their isolation devices—dress, the ban and avoidance, etc. Yet these devices are not wholly effective. Some of the conservatives become attracted by the liberal ways and cross over into the liberal group. Also a few in the liberal group become so identified with the larger society that they forsake the sect and pass over into its organizations, occupations, and life.

When the principles and practices of the sect are challenged by the government of the larger society, the conservatives are the ones the migrate; the liberals are willing to make compromises.

In Figure 5 more divisions have taken place within the sect. The nature and intensity of interaction with the larger society varies directly with the degree of liberalism of the branch of the Mennonites. In many respects the most liberal group cannot be distinguished from the larger society. All dress regulations are dropped, church services have been formalized, the minister and even the choir director are paid salaries, the members are well educated and enter any occupational field, including law and politics, and the community pattern of settlement gives way, particularly in urban areas, to individualized settlement.



*Figure 5—The third stage of interaction*



The moderate group continues to maintain dress restrictions—although the enforcement of these restrictions are relaxed in the urban areas—their services are simple, the ministers receive no salaries, and, except in the urban areas, community settlement is the rule. The conservatives maintain strict dress restrictions, traditional services; they remain rural and resist all change through the continued enforcement of the isolation devices. The conservative group remains homogeneous, the moderate group shows developing lines of stratification, and in the liberal group stratification is obviously present—economic, social, and theological.

The break-up of the sect into these distinct groups creates a secularization ladder. The movement up the ladder is most significant. In fact, the backward movement rarely occurs. When it does occur, it is most likely the result of mixed marriage.

Because the moderate and liberal groups have "colleague" relationships with the outside world—i. e., relationships where they are accepted as teachers, business men, doctors, chemists, or farmers rather than as Mennonites—assimilation into the world becomes quite easy. A considerable number do leave. However, that movement seems to be reduced both in number and significance by the existence of liberal Mennonite churches in the community—churches that are as liberal as the other churches in the community and are accorded by the community equal status with the other churches. Where such liberal churches do not exist, movement is definitely in the direction of other Protestant churches or to no church at all. A few of the conservative groups pass directly into the larger society. When this happens they usually do not join any church. Needless to say there is no backward movement from the larger society into the conservative groups.

Those who join the larger society do not become members of one particular class but become identified with the class most closely approximating their former social and economic standing in the sect. Consequently, the arrows (in the diagrams) from the sect to the larger society go in all directions. Likewise what movement exists from the larger society into the sect does not come from any one class-level in the larger society. This movement is largely, though not entirely, the result of mixed marriages. That movement both ways exists is ample evidence

that the social membrane separating the liberal sect-group from the larger society is very thin. As one goes down the ladder within the sect the membrane separating the sect and the larger society becomes more rigid.

Within the sect the movement is predominately up the ladder rather than directly out into the larger society because the social membrane separating the various sect groups is more permeable. Elements of common culture, race, religion, family ties, and proximity of settlement are factors making those membranes more permeable.

# Training Girls for Community Nursing Service

*By Mrs. Ursula Frantz*

In presenting this paper, I take courage from the thought that the religion Christ came to proclaim is not dependent upon bigness. William James, philosopher, says, "I am *against* all bigness and am *for* all the small invisible forces that work from individual to individual, stealing in through the crannies of the world like so many rootlets, yet rending the hardest monuments of man's pride, if you give them time."

Science recognizes the infinitude of the little. Christ preached it: the mustard seed—the leaven—the cup of cold water—the one talent—the widow's mite.

Thirty-one years ago the Mennonites planted a mustard seed in the form of a twenty-bed hospital near the outskirts of what was then the city of Beatrice, Nebraska. The elder of the congregation, the Reverend Gerhard Penner, and his no less zealous members were inspired to pay tribute to their Lord for having safely guided the destinies of His people through forty years of living in America, and elected to build the hospital that it might serve as a living memorial.

A Deaconess Sisterhood, a local organization, was established to provide a Christian nursing service. The practical and theological course conformed to the state standards and the "Diakonie" were taught by the Oberschwester.

The only expansion of hospital facilities took place in 1921 when the Sisters' home was built and the Sisters' quarters in the hospital were converted into rooms for patients' use. Notwithstanding its thirty-bed capacity, the daily average of patients is near twenty-five, and the average number of admissions per year is not less than 750. However, we believe that if a tuberculosis patient statistically contacts nine others and exposes them to infection, by the same token our 750 patients contact nine others,

and the possible influence exerted by our Deaconesses could easily reach a yearly total of over 4,000 people.

Think of the amazing growth of this mustard seed. Daily some of our Sisters receive greetings from a former patient whom they attended or whose father or mother were tenderly ministered to; or the patient himself says that he was sent to our hospital by a relative who happened to know the Sisters. Many who have been confused about God, have come to know Him through a simple expression of their kindly service.

As our blessed Saviour came into the flesh "not to be ministered unto but to minister," as the apostles willingly laid down their lives for their fellow-men, as Christian missionaries and pastors since that time have unselfishly spent their energies and talents to bring the Word of Life to dying men, so have our Deaconesses achieved greatness in the sight of God by serving in the sight of men.

Until the fall of 1930 our hospital conducted an accredited three-year school of nursing, admitting Christian young women whether they planned to enter the Deaconess work or not. At this time, however, state regulations required our third year students to spend twelve months in affiliation with a larger hospital offering a greater variety of clinical material. This imposed a hardship which we chose not to survive, and so in 1933 the school of nursing was closed.

As a nation we were in the midst of depression; professional nurses far exceeded the demand, and the continuance of our four years these nurse aids were the solution to all of our nursing problems.

Perhaps it was the demand for more experienced bedside workers in both home and hospital, or the desire of our nurse aids for more bedside work, or a combination of many factors which finally influenced us to lay plans for a training school for hospital workers. It was not our intention to train substitutes for graduate registered nurses, but rather to train workers in a small hospital to serve the smaller communities.

Since Beatrice is a typical mid-western county seat with a population of 10,000 and located in the center of a rich farming district, we were convinced that geographically, at least, we were ideally located for a training center. Secondly, there are few

small hospitals which have the two-fold advantage of having a Deaconess Sisterhood in connection and an adjacent Mennonite Community of some 600 souls. With the consent of the Sisters and the approval of our Board of Directors the training school idea matured, and the first class of six students was enrolled April 1, 1940.

The objective of the course is to provide community bedside nurses whose training fits them for a semi-professional Christian service. The length of the course is twenty-four months and includes experience in all departments of the hospital—medical, surgical, and maternity wards, besides in the operating and delivery rooms. It must be understood, however, that all the departments of our hospital are under the supervision of a graduate, registered nurse Sister who assists in training each student in addition to looking after the welfare of her patients.

Although the emphasis is placed on the practical work, students are required to attend classes either during the day or in the evening after the day's work is over. The following is copied from the record of one of the students who completed her course April 1, 1942.

- 29 hours of anatomy and physiology taught by a local high school instructor.
- 35 hours of materia medica taught by a staff physician.
- 10 hours of obstetrics taught by an obstetrician.
- 16 hours of ethics taught by the superintendent.
- 67 hours of Bible study and bedside devotions taught by the chaplain.
- 6 hours of Deaconess history taught by the class sponsor—a Sister.
- 10 hours of physical education taught by the high school physical education teacher.
- 20 hours of standard Red Cross first aid course taught by the Red Cross approved instructor.
- 60 hours bedside nursing taught by the superintendent and the Sisters.

In practical work she has completed:

- 5 months of household management and simple bedside nursing.
- 7 months of medical and surgical nursing.



6 months in care of mothers and babies.

2 months in the operating room.

2 months in the delivery room.

1 month vacation.

1 month in home nursing.

At the end of this period the student is qualified to perform all nursing procedures which she will be required to do in the small community hospitals or as a bedside nurse in the home.

At no time have hospitals of our size been able to secure the services of the desirable type of graduate nurse for general duty, partly because of a lower cash salary and mostly because of the lack of social opportunities. So, when difficult nursing procedures were required, these graduates were usually more inadequately prepared to perform them than are our two-year students who are trained to meet local requirements.

The course was viewed with conflicting opinions. Some considered it a glorified practical nurse course, others considered it as a lowering of the National League standards for nurse training, and some looked upon it as a practical solution of our problem which is the shortage of skilled workers in the small hospital and the small community. After the two year trial period, we are happy to say that our staff doctors, as well as our townpeople, wholeheartedly endorse the school. Calls for our graduates have come from many different community hospitals; in fact, we cannot supply the demand.

Locally our students perform home nursing service under our strict personal supervision and for this service the hospital charges a fee of \$1.00 per day. Convalescent cardiacs, flu patients, illness due to old age, mother and babies, and many other types of cases have made use of this service.

Over a period of two years experience, we have made some observations which we would like to share with this group. As previously mentioned our training school places emphasis on Christian service and uses modified principles of the Deaconess school to guide us. These principles include plenty of honest toil, a regimentation of habits, and discipline in Christian thinking. To our surprise, these young students crave direction and a goal. Innately the modern glamor girl is the Mennonite Maid of yesterday. She derives satisfaction from being a Girl Scout because she

may perform her good deed daily. The delicious exhaustion following honest toil has been denied her, so she turns to twirling the baton for exercise and excitement. She is in the Valley of Jehosophat—the valley of decision—and many of them are waiting to follow courageous souls.

Written in a "Letter to My Son" by a soldier's mother is this challenge to youth, "Comfort is a drawback and not an essential to the virility of man. . . . Men get their strength and their delight in building, not enjoying. So fear the future not at all. If the new generations have built a new world, what then? It may be impoverishment in the material sense of the work, but it will be spiritual adventure in the greatness of living."

Boys and girls need to be spiritually prepared as never before for the ordeal of the next few years. Training of minds and bodies will not be enough to have them come through the war unembittered and to make a just peace without vengeance. Their souls need to be fed and disciplined. To them the church must maintain its distinctive service of ministering in a Christ-like way—of inspiring them with faith and hope and courage—and of offering a haven to the spiritually stranded.

As a branch of the church our hospitals can in a practical way serve as a haven for young women seeking to live a useful Christian life and thus mutually benefit both the church and its young women. There is a great need of women workers for parish work, for teaching ministry in church and Bible schools, for day nurseries, for youth organizations, and for institutions caring for people of all kinds.

We understand that young men of the Mormon faith pledge two of the most productive years of their life to the church in the capacity of missionary or other work in whatever field of labor needs them—not for high salary but as a contribution to repay the church for the privilege of having been guided to maturity by its principles. That is the sacrifice demanded by parents and children alike by a faith we do not choose to imitate.

Another glowing example is the Salvation Army whose maximum salary for the captain and his wife is \$10 per week for each plus lodging and a car. Food, clothing, gas, auto repair, and all other incidentals and utilities must be paid for out of this salary. Surely no one can say that they work for gain, and yet their

bond of fellowship is one of the strongest.

I have mentioned these examples of sacrificial labor in response to those who say that to be a Deaconess requires too great a sacrifice. As a professional associate and observer rather than as a member of this group of Godly women it is not unseemly for me to dwell on the various virtues of being a Deaconess and secondly to propose the establishment of a Guild of Christian Service women in connection with our training school for community nurses. The Deaconess principles would be the basis for this association of workers, and would be modified to allow for the greatest possible extension of true Christian service.

May I mention some of the Deaconess principles? The Deaconess is a Christian woman (unmarried or a widow without children) who from love of her Saviour and gratitude to Him, desires to serve Him especially among the poor and needy, and who, in order to carry out this vocation, has voluntarily joined a Deaconess Sisterhood. She makes no vow, but having trained for this work of the church, it is expected that she will devote her life to it. This work consists of labor in hospitals, orphanages, homes for the aged, teaching in parochial and Bible schools, day nursery work, parish work, etc. Eligible young women are preferably between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five, of good health, practical ability, preferably high school education, and a sincere Christian spirit.

The Deaconess calling embodies a two part training, one is vocational, the other spiritual. With her training in both fields she may minister to the bodily and spiritual needs of her patient and thus achieve a success not otherwise possible.

I have observed that the young women in our training school have manifested an eagerness to learn the true meaning of Deaconess work. They have for the two years of their course associated closely with our Sisters and have come to know that a life whose inner spiritual lamp is aflame is a force that has no equal. Many of our sisters have spent twenty-five years of continuous service in our institution, and the students have come to admire their strength of purpose and influence their lives exert on those around them.

These students have shown an interest in establishing a modern Deaconess order to perpetuate the Deaconess ideals and have been

enthusiastic about the classes we have given on the Deaconess work and calling. Should we not encourage our young women to take this step? It is the equivalent of the C.P.S. training for our young men and would equip a girl for the many tasks of reconstruction awaiting the women of tomorrow.

To further study the feasibility of such an organization a Deaconess Research Committee was appointed by our Board of Directors. A tentative plan has been considered, and to assist them in their work they have asked me to present the following questions to you for discussion:

(1) Should this Christian Service Guild be a local organization or should a movement of this type be considered a conference project, or is there an organization of Mennonite women who might be interested in this as both war and peace time activity?

(2) Should membership be limited to Mennonites or should it be interdenominational?

(3) Should a retirement plan include a Mother House and allowance, or a cash endowment only, or should there be no retirement plan?

(4) Could returned missionaries be engaged as instructors in this training school or should the training be part of a college curriculum?

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# Suggestions for Improving the Small Christian Community

*By Guy Hershberger*

The community is one of the important units of the social structure. It is an area of common living, its members being in close association, working, playing, and worshipping together, promoting common interests, developing character and personality, building lasting friendships, social ties and loyalties. Since the community is such a vital part of the larger social order, both affecting it and being affected by it, we would do well to pause long enough for a brief look at the larger society of our own day before making a list of concrete suggestions for improving the community.

Everyone knows that not all is well with the world today. On every hand men are speaking of the "crisis of our age," whether they use these exact words of Sorokin or whether they prefer some other expression. And as expressions vary in form so do analyses and remedial prescriptions vary in content. There is no time here to present any extended study of these analyses and prescriptions, but I should like to set forth briefly a few contemporary ideas which seem most outstanding. It is significant that all of these prophets characterize our present civilization by some such term as materialistic, sensate or pagan, and that almost without exception they associate or identify this paganism in some way with the industrialization and urbanization of our western society. T. S. Eliot, an outstanding English writer, warns that the paramount issue of today is not democracy versus fascism. It is not forms of government that count so much as the content of a civilization. Fascism is rather a form of paganism which is vicious because of its positive character more than because of its form of government. American and English civilizations he says are neutral or negative, merely tolerating



Christianity, but not positively Christian or pagan. Such a civilization he feels can become just as dangerous as that of fascism once it becomes positively and actively secular.

The basic element in English and American civilization he says is avarice. To quote:

Perhaps the dominant vice of our time, from the point of view of the church, will be proved to be avarice. Surely there is something wrong in our attitude towards money. The acquisitive, rather than the creative and spiritual instincts, are encouraged. The fact that money is always forthcoming for the purpose of making more money, whilst it is so difficult to obtain for the purpose of exchange, and for the needs of the most needy, is disturbing to those who are not economists. I am by no means sure that it is right for me to improve my income by investing in the shares of a company, making I know not what, operating perhaps thousands of miles away, and in the control of which I have no effective voice—but which is recommended as a sound investment. I am still less sure of the morality of my being a money leader that is, of investing in bonds and debentures. I know that it is wrong for me to speculate: but where the line is to be drawn between speculation and what is called legitimate investment is by no means clear. I seem to be a petty usurer in a world manipulated largely by big usurers. And I know that the church once condemned these things. And I believe that modern war is chiefly caused by some immorality of competition which is always with us in times of "peace"; and that until this evil is cured, no leagues or disarmaments or collective security or conferences or conventions or treaties will suffice to prevent it.<sup>1</sup>

Eliot then goes on to say that the higher the degree of industrialization in our civilization the more thorough its paganization is likely to be.

The more highly industrialized the country, the more easily a materialistic philosophy will flourish in it, and the more deadly that philosophy will be. Britain has been highly industrialized longer than any other country. And the tendency of unlimited industrialism is to create bodies of men and women—of all classes—detached from tradition, alienated from religion, and susceptible to mass suggestion: in other words, a mob. And a mob will be no less a mob if it is well fed, well clothed, well housed, and well disciplined.<sup>2</sup>

O. E. Baker, American agricultural economist, speaks of our contemporary culture as "urban, . . . powerful, pervasive, per-

1. Eliot, T. S., *The Idea of a Christian Society*. New York, 1940, p. 103.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

meating now into the remotest rural districts, materialistic, with a philosophy tending toward paganism."<sup>3</sup> For a generation we have been acquainted with the thesis of Oswald Spengler that every great civilization goes through a cycle of change beginning with a childhood stage of pastoral life, followed by a youthful stage of agriculture, climaxed by the mature manhood stage of urbanism and industry which in turn is followed by a denouement of complete disintegration and decay. According to Spengler western civilization is now in its decadent, death agony stage. Bishop Oldham has warned us that the struggle of the Christian church today is not against the state; it is rather against paganism. American society in particular has been paganized, he says, by education, communication, the motion picture and the press. Our child centered education has led us far astray. "It may well be," he says, "that the main conflict between Christian faith and the secular interpretation of life will have to be waged in the field of public education. The church will have won little in obtaining liberty to preach and to conduct its own worship and services, if the whole weight of a public system of education is directed towards inculcating in the impressionable mind of youth beliefs about the world and man and conduct which are incompatible with the Christian understanding of life."<sup>4</sup>

Sorokin in his *Crisis of Our Age* does not agree with Spengler that this crisis is the death agony of western society. He believes rather that the world has always found itself in one of three types of culture: 1. The ideational in which "the true reality value is God." 2. The idealistic, an intermediary culture representing a "synthesis of the ideational and the noblest forms of sensate culture." 3. The sensate, a culture in which "the world lives and moves in the imperical world of the senses." Since the eighth century B.C., Sorokin says, the ideational type has been dominant in two periods; the idealistic in three and the sensate in two. And every period of transition from one type to the other has been a period of great tribulation, storm and stress, war and bloodshed. During the past four centuries the sensate type of culture has been dominant and now as we are beginning to make

3. Baker, O. E., "The Rural Family and its Significance to Organized Religion," *The Christian Rural Fellowship Bulletin*, No. 43, (June, 1939), p. 3.

4. Oldham, J. H., *Church, Community, and State* (New York and London 1935), pp. 17-18.

the transition to a new ideational or idealistic era we find ourselves in the bloodiest crisis in the twentieth, the bloodiest of all centuries.

Sorokin says we dare not treat this crisis as we would a slight cold because it is rather a serious case of pneumonia. Hence if we are to move in the right direction we must realize the seriousness of the crisis. We must reject its superannuated psuedo-values and reenthroned the real values which it has discarded. This will require nothing less than a complete transformation of our western mentality, and such a change in mentality will in turn be followed by a corresponding transformation of social relationships and forms of social organization. Here he reminds us that all forms of social organization are of relative value and not absolute. Hence the great issue of the day is not communism, fascism, socialism, capitalism, or democracy. What our time requires is rather "replacing the present compulsory and contractual relationships with purer and more godly familistic relationships. . . Not only are they the noblest of all relationships, but under the circumstances there is no way out of the present triumph of barbarian force but through the realm of familistic relationships." This will mean "a fundamental transformation of our system of values, and the profoundest modification of our conduct toward other men, cultural values, and the world at large."<sup>5</sup>

About ten years ago Reinhold Niebuhr, in a book with the startling title, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, shocked the complacent idealists by insisting that man's nature makes for a perpetual state of warfare in society, and that in the large scale social relationship we must always expect this warfare to exist. On the other hand, however, Niebuhr tells us that religion will always be "more fruitful in purifying individual life and adding wholesomeness to the more intimate social relations such as the family."<sup>6</sup> Thus we find Niebuhr agreeing with Sorokin on the need of the familistic type of social relationship. And Arthur E. Holt who likes to stress the values of democracy also says that these values have their "natural rootage in the simpler and more intimate relations of life—the home, the neighborhood and the world of simple labor." Then he adds, "The more one thinks

5. Sorokin, P. A., *The Crisis of Our Age* (New York, 1941), pp. 320-21.

6. Niebuhr, Reinhold, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, (N. Y., 1932), p. 63.

about the early Christian communities and the Roman Empire, the more one is convinced that the only piece of permanent social building was that carried on by the Christian community in the face of the Roman Empire."<sup>7</sup> Sorokin, Niebuhr, and Holt are simply saying, in a different way, what Cooley said a generation ago when he pointed out that society must depend for the refinement of the selfish, lustful drives of human beings upon the primary groups such as the family, the neighborhood and the brotherhood type of religious group, all of which are seriously challenged by our industrial society of today.

What has been said up to this point simply means that the best hope for the larger society of today is to be found in the small Christian community with its familistic type of life. It will be recognized at once that it is in exactly this area that the genius of Mennonitism is found. Historically the Mennonite church has been primarily a brotherhood, deeply concerned with the entire life of its members, spiritual, intellectual, social, and economic. One sixteenth century writer speaking of the brotherhood says: "They broke bread with one another as a sign of oneness and love, helped one another truly with precept, lending, borrowing, giving, taught that all things should be in common, and called each other 'Brother.'"<sup>8</sup> In describing the Hutterian community another writer says: "The Christian community of goods is for the purpose of providing the needy believers who may be old, sick, crippled and unable to support themselves, so that they be furnished with the necessities of life the same as the others." Under this system also all questionable occupations and business practices were eliminated. It is not surprising to read the following from an early Anabaptist writer. "Now, since Christians should not use or exercise vengeance, they must be exercised, lest they make themselves partakers of others sins. Therefore we make neither swords, spears, guns, or other similar weapons. But what ever is made in the interest and for the use of men, such as bread knives, axes, hoes, and the like, we may consistently make and do make."<sup>9</sup>

7. Holt, A. E., *Christian Roots of Democracy in America* (New York, 1941) pp. 128-129.

8. Quoted from Sebastian Franck in R. J. Smithson, *The Anabaptists* (London, 1935), p. 115.

9. Quoted in John Horsch, *The Principle of Nonresistance as Held by the Mennonite Church* (Scottsdale Pa. 1939), p. 29.



According to the Mennonite way of thinking, the church is simply a large family where God is the Father and where the children think of each other as brothers and sisters. The weekly service in a rural Mennonite church is more than a worship service, and conferences are more than meetings for transacting the business of the church. These gatherings are of the nature of family reunions and help to preserve the intimate personal relationships so necessary for the type of life which characterizes the Mennonite church. And as long as the brotherhood retains this intimate type of life it will not be so easy to give up the historic principles of the church.

This tradition of the Christian brotherhood has been at the heart of Mennonitism from its first beginnings. And if the small Christian Mennonite community is not functioning today as it ought it may be due to two factors: 1. In the course of time, the inner life of the Mennonites may have grown more or less sterile. 2. The impact of the contemporary pagan, sensate, industrialized, urban social order upon the Mennonite community may have become so great as to restrict its effectiveness.

There is little question that the industrial changes of the past seventy years have taken much of our Mennonite life out of the area of primary, familistic experiences, giving it over to secondary experiences and relationships which go with large scale industrial organization. The result has been a tendency to weaken the feeling of interdependence among the brethren. When all the members of a congregation live in a neighborhood group and work together, it is natural to exchange help and lend aid in case of fire, sickness and death, and in so doing the ideal of the Christian community is strengthened. But when the members of a congregation work at thirty different places in factory, farm, office, or schoolroom, mutual aid and active community brotherliness do not come so naturally or so easily. On the other hand, it is precisely in such situations as these that brethren are most likely to affiliate with labor unions and other organizations which employ coercive methods out of harmony with the nonresistant principles of the Mennonite church. It is natural for them to do so, since their fellow workers are doing likewise, since their grievances against the employer are often just, since these harsher, cruder methods fit in naturally with the large scale secondary



social organizations, and since their lack of daily contact with the members of the congregation removes the stimulus necessary for the encouragement of the opposite type of life.

For the same reason it is also in situations such as these that brethren are most likely to invest their money in the stocks and bonds of corporations whose business ethics are out of line with the principles of the New Testament as much as are those of the labor unions. And for the same reason again it is in situations such as these that brethren are most likely to feel the need of commercial life insurance of some similar device to provide a measure of economic security. Here we must remember that the end which life insurance seeks to serve is legitimate enough. The objection to it is that life insurance companies organized on a commercial basis have the profit motive uppermost. Employing methods as unchristian as those of labor unions and monopolistic business corporations generally. And while they are giving their aid to Christian people they tend to break down the solidarity of the church. The security sought by the investor is legitimate enough, but we believe that according to the New Testament way, and the Mennonite way, this security should be sought through the mutual helpfulness of the Christian brotherhood and not through commercial corporations whose affairs are directed by the profit motive.

As I see the problem of the Mennonite community today it is: How to build and strengthen the brotherhood so that the members will be more concerned with each other's spiritual, social and economic welfare than in the promotion of individualistic business projects. The issue is: How to perpetuate the Mennonite conception of the church with its familistic relationships so that the distinctive features and principles of Mennonitism may remain strong and virile in a world of large scale secondary organizations. To meet this issue successfully is no easy task. It will require the united and prayerful effort of the entire church and only with the blessing of God can it succeed. Furthermore, I do not know the answer to all the questions which may arise in connection with the issue. But I should like to submit the following suggestions for us to think about.

1. We must have a ministry with a strong faith in the mission of the Mennonite church. If we are to have this, our ministry

must understand the history of the church. I do not mean that they should be specialists in the study of history, but I mean that they must have an acquaintance with the history of the church, its ideals and its traditions, not merely of the past generation, but from the sixteenth century on. Writers on Christian doctrine and Christian life must be familiar with the doctrinal writings of Menno Simons and Pilgram Marpeck, and the preacher's sermons should be replete with illustrations and quotations from Mennonite writers. Catholic writings are full of reference to Thomas Aquinas, and Calvinists are always referring to Calvin. It is strange that Mennonite preachers and writers should devote so little attention to their own leaders and lean so heavily on Moody and Spurgeon and Gordon and Torrey. A true Mennonite church cannot be perpetuated without a ministry which understands thoroughly the heritage of the church, and which is moved by the spirit of the original Mennonitism of the sixteenth century.

2. We must have a brotherhood indoctrinated in the principles of the church, and sensitive to the encroachment of the social order upon the Mennonite way of life. This means a brotherhood which understands the Mennonite ideal of the Christian community and which not merely knows that the church has (or some of the churches have) a rule against life insurance, labor unions, and working in munitions factories, but has an intelligent understanding of why and how these forces militate against the life of the kingdom of God. Members of such a brotherhood will be ready to lose their jobs rather than violate their Christian principles and they will be actively interested in promoting a church life which is a holy life, a life of discipleship.

3. In the church at large and in every congregation there must be adequate organization to strengthen the ties of the religious community on every front. Every member must learn that when he is in need of some co-operative aid the Christian community is there to provide it. In case of loss by fire, storm, or by any other cause, the church must be organized to care for the need, and members should be interested in this program to such an extent that they will think of going nowhere else for help to supply the need. In facing the exigencies which come in times of sickness and death the Christian community should be organ-

ized to take care of these matters so well that here also the members can avail themselves of the church's facilities and need not be tempted to get their aid from other sources. The Mennonite Aid Society of Mountain Lake, Minnesota, has shown what the possibilities are in this field. Among the (Old) Mennonites there is a growing interest in this type of mutual aid which shows some promise of bearing fruit. But at best we have only made a beginning in this great field.

4. In the field of industrial organization there must be a thorough program of education of instruct the membership of the church as to the true significance of labor unions, to the end that each member may follow a consistent policy with regard to these matters. Experience shows that labor organizations are about as responsive to the conscientious objections of the non-resistant Christian, once they understand these objections, as is the United States government. In recent years the Committee on Industrial Relations of the (Old) Mennonite Church has signed numerous agreements whereby nonresistant workers may be excused from union membership with the privilege of making a contribution, in lieu of union dues, to some worthy charitable cause, where the money is not used for union organization. This line of endeavor needs to be developed further.

5. We must remember that the most effective testimony of the Mennonites in times past has been given through the group, and not merely as individuals. It has not been a matter of a few individuals here and there preaching their message, but rather of the entire brotherhood maintaining a faith and living a life, collectively, which was a testimony to the entire world. In the World War it was not merely the conscientious objector in the military camp who testified to the principle of nonresistance. It was rather the entire church standing together that gave this testimony to the world. And with our present Civilian Public Service program supported by the folks at home we believe the church has a greater opportunity than ever to give a collective testimony to the principle of nonresistance. Therefore, I would suggest that in the field of industry also there are both individual and collective ways of witnessing.

The individual way is for the factory laborer to take a stand against union membership and to give up his job for conscience'

sake if need be. Or for an investor to withdraw his investments when he finds them improperly used. But there is also a way in which the entire group can unitedly give its testimony to the Christian way of life in industrial relations. This is through the operation of industries in various rural communities which in every detail from management to labor, exemplify the employer-employee relationships, and the way of making one's living, taught in the New Testament. We have the capital to finance such undertakings; we have the labor to do the work; we have the capacity needed for management; all we need is a vision of the worth-whileness of the task and the determination to undertake it. Once we have the vision, money now going into the stocks and bonds of industrial corporations using questionable methods, or into other enterprises, wise or otherwise, will flow into undertakings such as these. And once this happens, brethren will labor to contribute it here in preference to places where the contribution from the Christian and ethical point of view will be less worth while. A Christian community giving its testimony in this manner should be able to make a much greater impression upon the materialistic world in which we live than a few individual workers in a factory merely refraining from union membership. Furthermore, such industries should specialize in products which in themselves are in line with Mennonite principles, most of them perhaps closely related to agriculture, and its workers would then not need to be embarrassed with the problem of working in war industries.

As I see it, the weak spot in our present war situation is the employment of brethren in war industries, and a way out of this dilemma should be found. In the first World War our Mennonite boys were in the army. In the second war we got the boys out of the army, but some of those remaining at home are in war production plants. Will we be able to get them out of here by the time the next war arrives? Unless we do, war industries may prove to be the Achilles' heel for the destruction of Mennonite nonresistance in America.

6. In giving its testimony to the world the Mennonite church must not forget that it is primarily a rural church and that its greatest collective testimony for the Christian way of life in addition to the message of salvation itself, must come out of the life of the



rural church community. Therefore every Mennonite rural church community must have a well-organized, forward-looking program of community building, a program which will keep the brotherhood in intimate, face-to-face association. There must be a faithful and able leadership capable of keeping the brotherhood working and playing together, thinking and studying together, singing, praying, and worshiping together. The thought and energies of all the members must be focused on the life of the Christian community. The community must be interested in making it possible for all who need land for farming purposes to get it. There must be provision whereby men with money to invest can do so in some community enterprise, agricultural or industrial, which will provide work and a livelihood to the members of the community. The community should provide ample opportunity for the expression of people who enter professions such as medicine and nursing as well as teaching. Every typical Mennonite community should have its own hospital with a Mennonite doctor at the head, and staffed with Mennonite nurses; and the hospital should be the center of an integrated, cooperative community health and medical program in which the medical needs of all the members receive equal attention, the whole being paid for through a common fund to which each member contributes his share according to his ability. There should also be organized and directed recreational activities, a community library service, and numerous other community services designed to meet the needs of the brotherhood, keeping its members living and working together.

7. A program such as this would challenge the talented and trained young people of the church to give a life of service to the community. Too long has the idea prevailed that when a Mennonite young man or woman has trained his mind to do some worth-while work a bit out of the ordinary that he must go to the city and away from Mennonite contacts to perform it. The trained youth and the church have both been responsible for developing this idea, with the result that too many of our best and ablest young people have been lost to the church. The time is here when the Mennonite church must come back to its original idea of the Christian brotherhood, the holy community, where all the members, whether rich or poor, educated or uneducated,



work together with one common purpose to serve the kingdom of God.

8. Finally, a church with this vision and this task before it will require the best leadership and the ablest ministry that it can find. Sometimes this leadership can be found in the immediate community, and sometimes it may have to be found elsewhere. Therefore able and spiritual young men, qualified for the ministry and called of God to preach, should be sought out by the church and brought to places where they are needed. When the church at Antioch needed a preacher, Barnabas went to Tarsus and brought Paul to the church which needed him. Had the Antioch church done as we so often do in some of our churches, they would have made a preacher of someone who lived in Antioch whether he had the ability and the calling or not; and had the rest of the churches done as we sometimes do today, Paul, though called of God to preach the everlasting gospel, would have been left untouched because he didn't happen to live where he was needed. And then, if the end had been as it is sometimes with us, another faithful and able young man would have gradually directed his energies elsewhere and the church would have lost him, and he have lost the church. The day is here when the church must learn to lay hands on her talented and trained young people as rapidly as they can be secured. She needs them, every one, if only she can see it. "I have written unto young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you and ye have overcome the wicked one," said the apostle John. May the Mennonite church arise to the occasion, enlisting the services of her strong young men, and girding up her loins, go forward in the fulfillment of the mission which God has committed unto her.

# Is There Need for a Mennonite Rural Life Publication

*By Melvin Gingerich*

## *How Learn Our Need?*

There are at least two approaches to the question "Is there a need for a Mennonite rural life paper?" The first is the statistical approach. It would be possible to circulate a questionnaire among the readers of Mennonite periodicals, asking them if they would be interested in subscribing to a paper dealing with Mennonite rural life. This method, however, has its faults. It is doubtful if a large enough number would reply to make the test significant. They would wish to know what type of paper was being planned and a brief description would not be a satisfactory basis upon which to make a decision. I have received the impression that to most people the suggestion of a Mennonite rural paper is so novel that they do not respond either affirmatively or negatively. Some months ago in my column in *The Mennonite Weekly Review* I suggested that we should have a paper of the kind being considered here. There were a number of enthusiastic responses to the proposal but not enough to warrant a conclusion that there is a wide demand for such a publication.

## *Analyzing Our Need*

The second approach is the one in which an analysis is made of the possible function of a rural life paper in helping solve problems confronting Mennonites. This is the approach which will be used in this presentation. An analysis of this kind will not be original but will merely call to your attention facts with which you are already familiar. In the first place, Mennonites have been and are a rural people. Their interests are largely rural interests. Most of them are engaged in farming activities six days a week. In their social gatherings much of the conversation has to do with their work as farmers. In spite of the fact that we believe our

religion should permeate everything we do all seven days of each week, our present Mennonite publications are concerned primarily with worship, church activities, and theological beliefs. This is not to suggest that these topics are receiving too much emphasis. Rather the point of view is that now we have very few articles and no publication concerned primarily with the spiritual problems and implications of our economic activities in the fields and in the market places, where we spend six days out of each seven. But in the development of character, how a man makes his living is just as important as how he prays or what kind of creed he accepts. It would seem, therefore, to be a logical conclusion that the church should concern itself very definitely with the economic activities of its people. Either there should be a new Mennonite publication dealing with our daily work or else more attention should be given to economic life in our present papers.

#### *Importance of Rural Life*

In the second place, Mennonites must preserve their rural life in order to survive. O.E. Baker and others have shown that families in the cities die out. Their birth rate declines and they do not perpetuate their own groups. The cities depend upon the country areas for their population. The Catholics, too, face this problem and have organized the National Catholic Rural Life Conference to grapple with it. One of their leaders wrote, "Even at the present birth rate, for every 10 adults in the city there will be 7 in the next generation, 5 in the third, and 3.5 in the fourth, a decline of two-thirds in a century. For the country the rate runs: 10, 13, 17, 22, giving an increase of 100 percent in a century. And the Catholic Church is strong in the cities. Her strength is her weakness." It would seem, therefore, to be a sound conclusion that in order to escape possible extinction, the Mennonite church must use her influence against a rapid migration of her people to the cities. To do this, rural life values must be stressed and farming must be made more economically and spiritually satisfying than it now is. A Mennonite rural life paper can help solve this problem.

There are others who approach the problem of survival from another angle. They believe that unpopular ideals such as the life of simplicity and non-resistance can be perpetuated best and perhaps only by the kind of close-knit religious community that one finds in rural areas. It is exceedingly difficult, if not impossible,

to maintain a healthy religious community life among the widely scattered members of an urban church. If a Mennonite publication on rural life can help preserve and make more successful our community life, it will have a very good reason for being.

### *The Value of Community Life*

The desire for survival is legitimate, but it is not the only motivation we should have. If our way of life is desirable it is good for others. There are many who believe that our civilization can survive only if it is built on neighborly, cooperative community life. A. E. Morgan, former head of the T V A, has stressed time after time that at the basis of our civilization must be mutual regard, trust, good will, and genuine neighborliness. These qualities, he writes, are not easily developed in cities but flourish in the small religious communities, such as the Amish and Mennonite communities. In the February, 1942, *Atlantic*, Morgan wrote under the subject "The Community, the Seed Bed of Society." He said, "Mennonite communities in America continue the ancient tradition of political and religious democracy from Swiss and Dutch villages. After four hundred years of tenacious adherence to the democratic community ways of their fathers, they display a vigorous spirit of neighborliness and cooperation which finds numberless expressions in informal friendly services as well as in formal cooperatives for life, fire, and storm insurance, for administration of orphans' estates, for banks and trust companies, for community elevator and stores, for registered breeding stock, and in various other ways."

O. E. Baker of the United States Department of Agriculture in a letter to Eli M. Shirk shows that the last bulwark of freedom is the rural community that has the familistic philosophy and retains the ownership of its land. He pleads with the Mennonites to hold to their faith "in the family as an institution for the reproduction of the race, for the transmission of wealth from generation to generation, and for the preservation of Christian culture . . . in the family farm and the private ownership of the land as the foundation of freedom, of democracy and of science."

The National Catholic Rural Life Conference has been circulating a folder entitled "A Rural Culture: The Amish People." In this pamphlet Reverend Patrick T. Quinlan writes, "The finest



rural culture which we have been able to observe to date in our travels is that which is to be found today among the Amish people banded together in colonies throughout various parts of our nation." In a personal letter from Reverend L. G. Ligutti, executive secretary of the Conference, he stated that they have often stressed that one purpose of their organization was to help build the kind of Catholic rural community life that they see exemplified in Mennonite communities.

The conclusion to this part of the discussion is obvious. If we have in our Mennonite rural communities a way of life that is basic in the preservation of our civilization, and if others look to us for inspiration and guidance, it is high time that we examine critically our own community life to see wherein are its elements of strength and its weaknesses. A rural life paper should produce constructive thinking in these areas.

#### *Type of Paper Needed*

If we conclude that a Mennonite rural life paper is desirable, we are next confronted with the problem of ways and means. There is really a need for two publications. For teachers, ministers, and scholars there might well be a quarterly like the *Journal of Rural Sociology* or like the *Mennonite Quarterly Review*. But it would hardly be feasible to launch a magazine of this type until the *Mennonite Quarterly Review* has built up a wider circulation among Mennonite leaders and teachers. Although the *Review* has been widely acclaimed by scholars in our state universities and theological seminaries to be not only the outstanding Mennonite scholarly publication but also to be on an equality with the most learned publications of any church organization in America, there are still more than a few members of our Mennonite college faculties who do not read it. The *Review* has carried a number of articles dealing with our rural life problems and it would be possible to have this publication serve as the official quarterly for those interested in scholarly articles on Mennonite community life.

Or a semi-popular publication like the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* might be launched. This four-page quarterly now after two years has a comparatively small circulation in spite of the fact that it is sponsored by the Historical Committee of the Mennonite General Conference (Old Mennonites).



*Features of our Paper*

There are a number who believe that our Mennonite rural life paper should be popular in nature and should have a very wide circulation among all the branches of Mennonites. Before presenting a definite plan for building up a large circulation, let us consider the features our paper should have. In the first place, it is doubtful if the publication should attempt to compete with our secular farm journals. A certain amount of informational material, however, could be printed. There are master farmers among the Mennonites who could very well give us the benefits of their experiences. Or there could be summaries of bulletins and articles furnished by our state agricultural colleges. The primary purpose of the paper, however, should be to present rural life as a satisfying way of living, whether considered from the spiritual, cultural, or economic angle. It should present constantly the challenge of better community building. Its emphasis should be on the cooperative, neighborly way of life rather than on the competitive. That is exactly what the Catholic publication *Land and Home* attempts to do. The Catholic Manifesto on Rural Life declared, "An intensive educational program is needed in order that rural youth might learn to appreciate the singular blessedness of life on the land in order that the farming group might be enabled to retain its economic independence and develop a spiritual and self-satisfying rural scheme. This education should be adapted to the special needs of the farming group and should be grounded on a Christian philosophy of life."

*A Philosophy of Rural Life*

Various means could be used to teach this philosophy of rural life. Short stories could be used as does *Land and Home*. There should be poetry and pictures emphasizing the beauty of our rural scenes. A section should be devoted to the problems of the rural pastor. One purpose of the paper would be to introduce various regions of the church to each other. One issue could have an article on a successful Ohio farmer, telling about his methods of farming, and presenting pictures of him, his farm, and his crops. The next issue could present a California farmer and so on through the various regions of the church. Back of this would be the purpose of drawing closer together the various areas and wings of the church.

Our common heritage and common problems would be stressed and controversial subjects would be kept in the background.

### *Mutual Aid*

One point of view that our paper should stress constantly is the importance of mutual aid in keeping alive our Christian community spirit. To give a history of each one of our successful mutual aid organizations would be a project that would require several years. And this should be done. As J. Winfield Fretz points out in his doctor's dissertation on Mennonite mutual aid, the manifestation of Christian love through mutual aid is as characteristic of a true Christian community as is the practise of non-resistance and other doctrines of the New Testament church. Until Dr. Fretz began writing on mutual aid very little material on this subject by Mennonite authors could be found anywhere, and he has not exhausted the field. For example, where can one find articles dealing with our Mennonite cemetery associations, with the practises dealing with the local manufacture of coffins, community owned hearses, and community help in digging graves and taking care of the needs of the sorrowing family during the days of bereavement? Why should not articles dealing on these subjects be treated in our church papers, thereby contributing to others the knowledge of successful community practises? The story of our fire insurance companies, of our hospitals, and of many other cooperative projects should be told.

### *Conservation*

Our Mennonite rural life paper must devote considerable space to conservation. We who believe in a philosophy opposed to destruction and waste should be conservation-conscious as few other groups are. We should be informed on the latest scientific information relating to conservation and our farms should be examples of the latest and best soil-saving techniques. The idea of stewardship should pervade our thinking not only in its relation to our use of money but also in its relation to our use of the soil. This point of view must be crystal-clear in our publication.

### *Colonization*

Perhaps another feature could be the analyzing of possible locations for new Mennonite communities. Too often small groups

of Mennonites have become the victims of enthusiastic land promoters. Investing their money in poor lands, they have struggled along for a few years and then, bankrupt, have returned to their former communities. A study of the methods and advertising of these land salesmen and the unsuccessful communities that resulted is an excellent thesis topic that needs to be assigned. To avoid this calamity of unsuccessful colonization our paper should investigate scientifically all locations being considered for possible settlement.

### *Ways and Means*

Now let us consider how a paper of this kind could be started. In the first place, it might be very difficult to launch a new paper at the present time and to build up a large circulation unless it would be subsidized at first by one of our conferences. If we could have our paper printed by one of our publishing companies and circulate it among those who are already subscribers of one of our papers, we could start out with a fairly large list of readers. Since it is our purpose primarily to serve the largest possible number of readers, a plan such as this would seem desirable. The editor and business manager of the *Mennonite Weekly Review* would be glad for the opportunity of trying this experiment. They will print for us once a month a page in the *Review* entitled "Mennonite Rural Life." They are willing to have us turn over to other community papers the same materials so that the page could be run simultaneously by a number of papers circulating in Mennonite communities.

# Mennonite Service Projects in Time of War and Peace

*By Don E. Smucker*

This topic raises so many delicate and complicated questions that a fair proportion of time must be devoted to background from which it grows.

In the first place let us recognize quite clearly that the service projects envisaged here are not the traditional mutual aid activities within our Mennonite communities. Quite the contrary, the reference here is to the works of mercy and service done for non-Mennonite, non-historic peace church and perhaps even non-Christian elements in communities as small as Hesston, Kansas, and as large as Philadelphia. Our ancient doctrines of separation and non-conformity provide anything but a fertile soil for the practice of what essentially is emergency social work in American communities organized for war. The Pauline injunction not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers is a difficult text for a world where apostasy and unbelief are precisely the causal factors of the emergency requiring special service activities. No one is asking for the abandonment of these doctrines but surely some adaptation to special circumstances is called for.

Secondly, there are recent theological tendencies in the various branches of American Mennonitism inhibiting the skillful practice of social service activities. The writer has reference to the articulate group in every conference which has waged doctrinal war (and in many cases with real justification) upon modern religious liberalism whose cardinal doctrine has been the necessity of works expressed on a social level; in other words, the social gospel. Without lasting judgment on the theological controversies of the various branches of the Mennonite Church, it is worth noting that the constant attacks on the social gospel have placed suspicion over the real importance of *any* social work. How to justify practical works and still not be

censored by a weak, wishy-washy liberalism. In this case, one must consult writings of Menno Simons himself to see what the relation is between the doctrine of justification by faith and the social message of the church. Parenthetically, may it be noted that few great figures of Christendom have been so thoroughly ignored and boycotted as Menno Simons.

Speaking of this matter he declares that "... we do not seek our salvation in works, words or sacraments. . . . but we seek it alone in Jesus Christ." But, Menno does not make the fatal error of implying that ethics is outside the pale of Christian responsibility. For, he further says: "But that we avoid sinful works and desire to conform ourselves in our weakness to His word and commandment, for this we do because He has thus taught and commanded us. *For whosoever does not walk according to His doctrine, testifies by his deeds that he does not believe in Him nor know Him, and that he is not in the communion of the saints.* (John 15:7; I John 3:10; 5:10; II John 6.) (462a; II: 262a)."

With this foundation Menno goes on to express quite positively the social message of the church. His eloquent words have a breathtaking relevancy for our day: "Beloved reader, it has not been heard of that an intelligent person clothes and cares for one part of his body and leaves the rest destitute and naked. O, no, it is but natural to take care for all the members. Thus it must be with those who are the Lord's church or body. All who are born of God, are partakers of the spirit of the Lord and are called into one body of love, according to the scriptures, are ready by such love to serve their neighbors, not only with money and goods, but also, according to the example of their Lord and Head, Jesus Christ, in an evangelical manner, with life and blood."

Continuing he points out: "They exercise charity and love as much as they have ability; they suffer no one to be a beggar among them; they distribute to the necessity of the saints, receive the miserable, take the stranger into their houses, console the afflicted, assist the needy, clothe the naked, feed the hungry, do not turn their face from the poor, and do not despise their own suffering members—their own flesh. Isa. 58:7,8. (504a; II: 309a)"

This section is ended with a scathing denunciation of hypocrisy among those who profess but not practice Christ's gospel: "O, min-



isters, ministers, where is the power of the gospel which you preach? Where is the signification of the Supper which you administer? Where is the fruit of the Spirit you have received? And the righteousness of your faith which you can paint and present so beautifully before the poor ignorant people? Is it not all hypocrisy that you preach and would pretend and maintain? Are you not ashamed of your easy-going gospel and worthless preaching and fruitless breaking-of-bread, you who in so many years have not gathered sufficient strength from your gospel, teaching and sacraments that you have been able to preach your suffering, miserable members from the streets, notwithstanding the Scripture plainly teaches and says, 'who-so has this world's good and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?' Also Moses: 'There shall be no beggars among you.' I John 3:17; Deut. 15:8. (505z; II:310a).

Consequently, one may assume that it is historically, biblically, and theologically sound to devote much time to the practical aspects of social service work.

In the light of this truth it is necessary to approach the problem of community with an additional assumption, namely, that this work is a permanent claim on the time of a true Christian; that world conditions further point toward a post-war turbulence which will require an even greater global expression of our testimony in these terms. And, above all, that American Mennonites are not undertaking this work primarily to buy immunity from hostile communities. It would utterly violate the inner integrity of our peace testimony to undertake these activities in anything less than a profound religious conviction as to their rightful, permanent part in our Christian experience.

With this background, we are ready to consider the bill of particulars facing us in the average American community. Roughly speaking these activities can be broken down into two broad classifications: first, those more formal governmental or quasi-governmental activities built around some aspect of the war effort; second, those more independent and voluntary activities dealing with special problems caused by the general condition of crisis and unrest.

In the first category the main activity is that increasingly gigantic and closely organized effort called Civilian Defense. Two attitudes

may be taken in relation to Civilian Defense. First, is the approach of almost complete non-cooperation along with a program of alternative service; this is the "line" of the Mennonite Central Committee and most of the Mennonite groups with a more unified peace testimony. An outstanding example of this policy is Souderton, Pennsylvania where 400 Mennonites—most of them old Mennonites—have taken first aid instruction, forming units which will act independent of Civilian Defense in the event of an emergency. In a like manner they have also received instruction in fire fighting and will have their own fire fighting squads if their services are needed. The crucial point seems to be the securing of accredited instructors to give the standard training necessary for a recognized independent group.

The second program for Civilian Defense permits a limited, discriminatory relationship. Unquestionably, there are parts of Civilian Defense more valid and less militaristic than others. For example, the nutrition program is an excellent attempt to improve the diet of the American people through night courses usually held in the local high schools under a trained domestic scientist. Then, there are those who participate in certain parts of Civilian Defense relating to the war effort such as air raid precautions. They point to the general experience in England where the pacifists would not cooperate in these matters before the war but gave substantial cooperation once the war actually started. The great moral crisis came when this work was made compulsory without exemption for conscientious scruples. At that point there were a number of objectors who conflicted with the law. If America is ever bombed, however slight, or, if there is even a strong possibility of being bombed, this writer does not doubt that this aspect of Civilian Defense, along with many others, will be made compulsory. As a matter of fact, most active Civilian Defense workers will frankly say that in the event of an emergency groups of workers would be moved about very much like an army, going from one concentration point of crisis to another.

The London Quakers, however, have given a strong clue to the solution of this problem. They declare that the crux of the matter is the sense of vocation on the part of the individual Christian: "Some people are inclined to judge the rightness or wrongness of firewatching by the Government's statement that it is an essential 'national service.' It is not what the government thinks about firewatching

(or about any other service) that must determine what the Christian pacifist thinks about it. The individual should make his own first-hand judgment before God, and not be influenced by whether others will or will not think he is performing an essential war service." That is an excellent yardstick for all problems of non-resistance in war time!

*In any case, it is clear that we must be prepared for emergency conditions.* The old isolationist argument that America would never be attacked as dead as a dodo. And, be it noted, the very fact that modern war is totalitarian places the conscientious objector in peril equal in gravity to the most articulate militarist. This has brought a common fellowship of suffering in places that have actually been bombed. It remains to be seen how it will develop in America with its present role as the human and material arsenal for global warfare.

It goes without saying that in those Mennonite congregations and communities where the peace testimony is badly disintegrated that the policy in relation to Civilian Defense is neither one of alternative service nor discriminatory participation. Rather, it is full, uncritical cooperation, sometimes with unusual enthusiasm to prove that Mennonites really do support the war.

In between Civilian Defense and the completely independent and voluntary groups is the Red Cross. In some respects it is a more puzzling problem than Civilian Defense. For it is civilian in structure and direction, yet candidly geared into the war effort on a partisan basis. However, there are points where its activities appear to be genuinely life-conserving. A conspicuous case in point seems to be its relief activities in foreign lands such as Greece where other agencies like the MCC or AFSC are unable to operate. The writer of this paper, after careful consideration, decided to participate in the well-known blood donors problem which seeks voluntary contribution of blood for use in military hospitals throughout the world. Taking the yardstick of the British Quakers, the fact and the symbol of giving blood for the broken body of a soldier somehow seemed to be my Christian duty, so help me God. Indeed, it was a subjective decision but one to which I was strangely drawn. In the realm of sewing and knitting, it seems patent that our major responsibility, if not our sole responsibility, is to the MCC. It should not be difficult to interpret this action to either the Red Cross itself or other community groups.

It is now proper to consider the second broad division of service activities available to Mennonite people, namely, the more independent, voluntary, non-military works of mercy and kindness.

In this connection services to the foreign born and inter-racial activities top the list. The Japanese evacuation in California should evoke profound understanding from a people dubbed as *Volk unterwegs*. Surely the Mennonites understand what it means to be uprooted from home and land. Two recent cases among Mennonites are deserving of commendation. A Japanese C.O. is being saved from transfer from a West Coast CPS camp to the internment or concentration camps. Instead—and after considerable pressure from the CPS boys themselves—he will be sent to the MCC camp in Colorado Springs. Again, Bluffton college officials have announced that a Japanese college student from a California institution will be invited to enroll there at the start of school in September. As a farming people, Mennonites have a great opportunity to resettle these unfortunate victims of totalitarian war. It needs to be recognized that non-resistant people sometimes are considered undesirable by the Japanese themselves who do not desire to add suspicion to their already sad lives by identification with folks who are not cooperating with the war effort.

While dealing with refugees it should be recorded that the Mennonite record with Jewish refugees from Germany has been very unfortunate. It might as well be recognized that only too many Mennonite communities, particularly the Kansas communities with their more recent European connections, have a strong undercurrent anti-Semitism running through them. *The Defender*, a vile anti-Semitic magazine, along with countless pamphlets equal to the Nazi Jew-baiting magazine, *Der Sturmer* have been printed for Gerald Winrod in the Herald Publishing company of Newton, Kansas. Mr. Winrod, by the way, has been openly charged with Nazi connections and has spoken in many Mennonite churches and has dozens if not hundreds of Mennonites taking his magazine. The identification with anti-Semites comes from a belief that anti-Communism and anti-Semitism are inextricably bound together. But, whatever the reason, it seriously weakens our community testimony in particular and our Christian testimony in general.

As far as the writer knows, two of our institutions, Goshen and Bluffton, have taken German Christian refugees into their faculties



and student bodies. But a people with four centuries experience with refugees should lead all the rest in this work, regardless of the ideology of those suffering. In concluding this section on racial work, mention should be made of the American negro and his present desperate need of friendship and sympathy as he sees our racial hypocrisy at work during a war presumedly fought against racialism.

In the interests of conserving space and time, additional community activities will be listed very briefly from this point on. The following are suggestive of the tremendous field of opportunity open: help persons, both Mennonite and non-Mennonite discharged from their occupations for reasons of conscience or nationality; help meet the shortage in farm labor; fill in gaps in public health through home hygiene, nurses-aid-work in hospitals and practical nursing at home; provide help for overworked mothers who have men in the home working all hours of the day and night or, perhaps, mothers who are trying to work and take care of their children at the same time; organize recreational groups and nurseries for children in underprivileged areas; offer services as one Mennonite pastor has recently done to the public schools, working as substitute teachers or in other capacities; cooperate with temperance groups fighting the appalling rise in liquor consumption; in the case of city-dwellers, working as volunteers in settlement houses; visitation of jails; interpretation of Civilian Public Service, the philosophy of community service behind it, notable examples of emergency service such as the Bluffton camp and the Goshen tornado, etc.

With these many possibilities open to us, several positive achievements need to be recorded in conclusion. Today, the conscientious objectors of America have virtually abolished one of the most ruthless points of community conflict and friction of the first World War; the war bond problem. Through the new government regulation permitting the purchase of non-military government issues and, further, through the MCC contributions with the glorified receipt in the form of a bond or stamp, the nerve has actually been cut a very serious major problem of community life. All the more reason, therefore, for a definite program of community service. *It has been a serious mistake to assume that the abstention from political action also means the abstention from valid Christian social action.* Today, the Mennonite Central Committee is giving keen leadership to the profound peace testimony which has survived wild outbursts.



of mass barbarism in many different parts of the world for four centuries. In carrying on our community work we may recall the statement appearing on the MCC certificate: "In following this way we feel that we are true patriots, for we build upon the eternal principles of right and truth which are the only foundations of stable government in our world community."

# The Environmental Influences Affecting the Decisions of Mennonite Boys of Draft Age

*By Robert Kreider*

I regret that this paper cannot partake of the statistical exactness which we had originally desired. At this early date (Aug., 1942) summary information on the young Mennonite men in camp (CPS, noncombatant, and regular military service) is not available. Perhaps a year or two hence we shall have the materials at hand to offer a more scientifically valid analysis of the problem.

In lieu of such summary statistical data, I have sought to gather objective material in several ways. Thirty-five different Mennonite ministers and laymen have shared through correspondence their interpretations and observations. From ministers I have received brief case studies of 179 young men who have been drafted—102 serving in one of the military branches and 77 in CPS camps. Then, of course, I have used the technique of the informal interview and discussion.

A fundamental assumption in this entire study is this that the behavior of an individual is profoundly affected by environmental factors—religious, sociological, economic, psychological. Implied in our faith is this belief that man is molded by his environment. Mennonites of all ages have been deeply concerned about the type of home, community, church, and economy within which the young generation is nurtured.

Innumerable environmental and sociological factors have been brought to my attention as being significant in this study. First, it must be made clear that the generalizations offered here are of a tentative nature. They are simply hypotheses. Moreover, no one factor alone seems to explain the choice of a draftee. There may be a number of influences converging upon the young man confronted with the draft. In many cases there are conflicting factors competing for dominance in the mind of an individual. We are all well aware that when we peer into the realm of the individual conscience there remains much which is unexplainable. Visible, tangible,

measurable sociological factors do not explain all. Not subject to measurement is the power of the spirit.

To lend system to this study, we have grouped the environmental factors according to several headings; the church, the home, the community, and other associations. First we consider the influence of the church and the individual's relationship to the church.

## I. THE CHURCH

The Mennonite churches which have cultivated and cherished the traditional principles of the Mennonite heritage have a high percentage of C.O.'s. These are the churches which have kept alive those basic principles of faith: believers' baptism, freedom of conscience, nonresistance, nonswearing of oaths, the simple life, nonconformity, brotherly love and mutual aid. These are churches which have maintained their conservatism on ethical issues. They have continuously emphasized their nonconformity to the world in all phases of religious and social conduct. When a church has encouraged nonconformity in all phases of life it is less difficult for such a church to be nonconformist in the hour of crisis when the church is called to make its witness of nonresistance. As one has stated, "The teaching in these churches has been so thorough, basic, persistent that they believe to be a Mennonite can mean only one thing and that is a C.O. position." The nonresistant stand of these Mennonite groups is so clearly understood by all who unite with the church, that all know that to take other than the C.O. stand means to be put out of fellowship with the church. A natural corollary to this mutual understanding of the church is the administration of disciplinary sanctions upon those who fail to live up to the peace ideals of the brotherhood. Branches of the church which discipline their young men who take up military service have a higher ratio of C.O.'s. The disciplinary techniques differ, however, in degree of rigidity among the churches. The hour of decision for the young men of these traditional, disciplinary groups is not the time of the questionnaire's arrival, but the day of union with the church.

Now for a comparison of the several branches of the Mennonite church on the ratio of C.O.'s to church members. To be noted is the fact that the conservative branches, the more traditional groups, the groups which have employed disciplinary techniques have the higher ratio of C.O.'s. This data is taken as of June 24, 1942.

The average ratio for all Mennonite groups is one CPS man to 99 church members. A word of qualification should be added. At this date in the CPS program, the following ratios can be no more than crude indexes of the C.O. position of the respective Mennonite groups.

	Total	Men in CPS Camp	Ratio
Old Order Mennonite	1544	25	1 to 68
Old Order Amish	12085	174	1 to 69
Church of God in Christ, Mennonite (Holdeman)	2800	40	1 to 70
Conservative Amish	3440	41	1 to 84
Old and Amish Mennonite	50893	529	1 to 96
Evangelical Menn. Brethren	1172	12	1 to 98
Mennonite Brethren	7650	74	1 to 103
Krimmer Menn. Brethren	1000	9	1 to 111
General Conference	26842	235	1 to 114
Central Conference	3327	25	1 to 133
Menn. Brethren in Christ	2630	13	1 to 202
Brethren in Christ	5226	21	1 to 249
Defenceless Mennonite	1550	6	1 to 258

Some Mennonite congregations have continuously emphasized the Christian peace principle, but have not approached the peace witness so much from the angle of the Mennonite heritage. Such churches with a consistent peace program in the Sunday School, young peoples groups and other church activities have a high percentage of C.O.'s. However, they have utilized a bit different educational approach to the peace principle than the more traditional churches.

Congregations at a great distance from the areas of concentration of their branch and congregations which are isolated have fewer C.O.'s. In such isolated congregations the participation in Mennonite conference activities is more limited. The churches do not have that high degree of Mennonite consciousness which is in evidence where there are adjoining communities populated with Mennonites of their conference. These solitary congregations have lost in some instances the sense of belonging to the Mennonites. Illustrative of this factor are the churches of the Pacific District of the General

Conference. A great distance from the major General Conference settlements and too far away to be under the direct influence of their church college, the West Coast churches have a record of 12 boys in C.P.S. to 36 in the armed forces.

Perhaps, too, the size of the home congregation has its affect as an environmental factor. I believe that there is an optimum sized congregation for spiritual and ethical vitality—not too large and not too small.

It would seem that congregations which have become imitative of modern Protestantism in terms of worship, organization, activities, theology have lost something of the consistency of the peace witness, simply because they have lost some of their historic Mennonite faith. One minister observes:

Generally we have not emphasized the traditional principles of the Mennonite Church as we should have. We have been passing through a period when less emphasis was placed on our differences and more on our common faith. We discovered that as churches we did not have to fight with other denominations to keep our own church in existence. . . we united in a common Christian effort. In so doing I believe we also compromised at least at times. With our principles being emphasized less our young people in many instances were led to believe that we were not different from other church groups. This idea found acceptance because of the social desire for group approval.

Religious and social imitation of Protestantism may lead imperceptibly to the compromising of our historic peace witness.

✓ It is a definite conclusion that churches under the spell of non-Mennonite Bible schools have less C.O.'s. In some of our churches the Bible school influence eats away at that which is distinctively Mennonite. From the non-Mennonite Bible schools often comes a dogmatic, militaristic theological system incompatible and foreign to orthodox Mennonite theology and practice. Bible school theology finds it impossible to reconcile the Old Testament and Biblical non-resistance. Bible school theology is often absorbed in pre-millennialist prophecy and speculation. To criticize the influence of the non-Mennonite Bible schools is not enough. We as Mennonites need Bible schools, Bible courses for the non-college Mennonite youth, but we need Mennonite Bible schools!

The leadership of the pastor or pastors is tremendously significant. The minister may have much to do with the spiritual and



nonresistant nurture of the young Mennonite and he may be a vital influence when the young man confronts the crisis of conscription. We are all aware of the general qualities which make for a consecrated, effective Christian ministry. Beyond that the minister must have a continuous peace testimony if he is to be a positive determining factor for nonresistance. Many are the churches among certain branches which have very few C.O.'s simply because of inept, non-pacifist, yes, non-Mennonite ministry.

What ministerial qualities are needed to produce C.O.'s? First, men are needed in the ministry who are Mennonites—men who have a deep appreciation for the Mennonite nonresistant heritage. Non-resistance is not one of those tenets of faith which can just be taken for granted. There must be peace sermons. There should be continuous instruction in nonresistance, with no let up in post-war periods. Mennonite congregations which have no C.O.'s or very few are often ones which have had a weak pacifist, weak Mennonite ministry. Second, to be a positive influence the minister should have a thorough understanding of the CPS program and must be active in disseminating correct information regarding the IV-E classification. It is a tragedy to note the number of young Mennonites now in the army simply because of ignorant pastoral leadership. A further quality necessary in the minister is an interest and readiness to guide the young men in the difficult task of filling out questionnaires and in overcoming technical problems with difficult draft boards. Many ministers have been very helpful to their young men through systematic visitation, use of questionnaires, being available at all times for counseling, meeting with the young men collectively. But, unfortunately, there are young Mennonites in the army today because of the inexpert and disinterested leadership of the home minister during the critical period of questionnaires, appeals, etc.

We have spoken of the qualities of the minister. It might be added that congregations without the leadership of a regular pastor may have fewer C.O.'s. Also, churches with a frequently shifting pastoral leadership seem to have fewer C.O.'s. The longer the span of a nonresistant pastor's ministry, the more significant generally his influence. It has been suggested that the conservative groups with an unsalaried ministry have more influential pastoral leadership. The period of service of the unsalaried minister is

X much longer certainly than the salaried minister. Is it true that the more conservative a group, the more powerful and the greater the prestige of the leader?

Substantiated by almost all of the case studies and by the observations of those interviewed is this that the greater the degree of participation of the young Mennonite in organized church activities, the more likelihood he will seek C.O. status. Non-church members and irregular church attendants are less inclined to be C.O.'s. The church has little opportunity to cultivate in these boys the nonresistant faith. They just weren't there to be cultivated. Those who have been delinquent in church attendance have been resisting church pressures and appeals all along the way. Many of these young men are the ones who have not been living up to the ethical and spiritual ideals of the church. Among this group are to be found the ones associating with the "fast crowd," the ones who look with disdain upon the church. Not subject to measurement, but it would seem that the depth of the spiritual life of the Mennonite youth has a direct correlation with his acceptance of the C.O. position. Individuals who have been inactive and irregular in church affairs realize that it is "not quite consistent to take a heroic stand for peace when they are not giving whole hearted support to the church program." Now to vindicate these generalizations. First the non-combatants and those in regular army service: out of 83 cases studied 46 were found to be inactive; 20 were regular church attendants; 17 were only fair in attendance but not active; 20 were regular church attendants and active participants. In other words, only 24 percent of the young Mennonites in the army were active members in their home churches. Now the C.O.'s: out of a total of 59 cases studied, 6 were irregular and inactive church attendants; 8 were fair church attendants; while 45 were active. Seventy-six percent of the IV-E men were active members in their home churches.

## II THE HOME

An even more fundamental cultural influence than the church is the Mennonite home.

Of prime importance is the molding of the character and the decisions of Mennonite youth is the family. Though the minister be nonresistant in message and deed, the attitudes and decisions of the home stand regardless of what the minister advises. The family is

important in stabilizing and maintaining the peace testimony of the church. What attributes of family life encourage the C.O. stand among the children? The parents of C.O.'s are faithful, active church goers. Among 74 C.O.'s of which we have case sketches, only two C.O.'s are reported to have come from homes where the parents were poor church members or where the home was disorganized. Presumably the other 72 cases are from homes where the parents are faithful church members and encourage the sons in their C.O. stand.

Observation leads to the following conclusions: C.O.'s come from homes where the parents have given the children basic peace training. C.O.'s come from homes where nonresistance means are used by parents in overcoming evil. They are the homes where the highest value is not placed on quarter sections or bank accounts or Buicks or society columns but upon the things of the spirit, upon the value of conscience. The home of the C.O. is one where the family traditions are cultivated and encouraged—such family traditions as respect and obedience to the counsel and leadership of the parents, family worship, family church attendance, reunions, frequent visits with the relatives, etc. In the home of the C.O. the parents are actively concerned about guiding the decisions of the youth into the correct channels.

The homes of the young Mennonites who go to the army often present a contrast. In many of these homes the parents are not too active and faithful as church members. In some of the homes the children have been deprived of peace training. A few Mennonite parents have even encouraged their sons to seek I-A or I-AO classification. Unfortunately some of the homes of the noncombatants and the regular service men have been disorganized. There are homes where the parents have failed to exercise proper parental authority. The report on the cases of boys who have gone into the army substantiates these hypotheses: of 46 cases studied, 16 boys came from homes where the parents were faithful church folk; but 16 came from homes where the parents were inactive, irregular church attendants; 6 were from homes where there was no peace training and where the sons were actually encouraged to enter the army; 4 were from disrupted and disorganized homes; 4 were from homes where the parents failed to exercise proper authority.

There seem to be Mennonite homes where the children are under-

nourished in ethical and spiritual training. Some parents have assumed no responsibility to their children regarding their draft decisions. Because of indifference, they have said that it is entirely up to the son to decide what form of service he takes. Often the son does not have the facts nor the mature judgment to make an intelligent decision.

It would appear that the family is a weaker social institution among urban Mennonites than among rural. Many competitive attractions drain the city family of its strength, unity and solidarity. In the city the individual, not the family, is the unit of society. In rural areas the Mennonite family is stronger because the family is the basic social and economic unit. Parental influence seems, therefore, to be a greater determinative factor in the rural areas than in the urban.

Sometimes the authoritarian, C.O. direction of the parents may have its obverse side. Because of the weight of home pressures, some young men go to CPS camps without a definite nonresistant commitment and perhaps against their own inner wishes. Some go C.O. to satisfy the parents. I am convinced that many who choose non-combatant service rather than unqualified army service, do so to appease in part parental and church desires.

### III THE COMMUNITY

In consideration of the community influences affecting the Mennonite draftee we are concerned about the type of community (rural or urban), the occupation, the community socials, the psychological tenor of the wider community, etc.

Out of rural communities come the great majority of the men of our Civilian Public Service camps. Approximately 85 percent of the Mennonites at Camp Colorado Springs are of farm background. This undoubtedly is typical of other MCC-operated camps. Mennonites of urban communities produce fewer C.O.'s. To be a conscientious objector to war in an urban environment is not an impossibility. It is simply more difficult to be a C.O. in the city. Why is it more difficult?

In the city is to be found a multiplication of the influences of secularization. The urban environment weakens the family unit—basic to the Mennonite culture. In the city the processes of social accommodation set in. Non-Mennonite associations multiply. Men-



nonites begin to join Rotary clubs, Kiwanis clubs, womens auxiliaries for this and that. They may even begin to engage in political activities. The children are sent to the city schools. In the city those two basic Christian institutions, the home and the church, can be so easily shoved into the background. Folk of the city, workers in the factories and offices lose the rugged independence of the tiller of the soil. The Mennonite in the city can become so compromised in his behavior, so enmeshed in community and occupational activities that he finds it difficult to extricate himself from his urban world to make the witness against war. A host of subtle social sanctions press in upon the urban Mennonite urging him to conform. Though the first generation Mennonite in the city may be able to resist the forces of urbanization and secularization, the second generation is more apt to succumb to such forces and the Mennonite nonresistant position may then be dropped by the wayside.

Among the General Conference Mennonites the urban churches of the industrial East have a far lower number of C.O.'s than the rural churches of the Middle West. From his study of secularization among the Mennonites of Elkhart County, Karl Baehr shares the following information:

Around Goshen the deviations from following the peace witness of the church was directly related to urbanization. The urban churches whether Old Mennonite or Central Conference had a poorer showing than rural churches. All rural churches, with the exception of the Conservative Amish where one went to the army, had 100 per cent records. . .

Mennonites who engage in business, industrial, professional occupations are less inclined to be C.O.'s. These non-farm occupations draw folk to the towns and cities, where they are subject to urban influences. Mennonites in the shops, in the offices, in the laboratories, in the factories are in close daily contact with many who do not believe as they do. Living and working in a non-pacifist and non-Mennonite world, it is difficult for the Mennonite to stand up courageously and be a non-conformist—a C. O. The factory worker and the business man has a more difficult time to live his convictions. Therefore, his sons are also affected. Young men have said, "It surely takes a lot of courage to be a C.O. amidst all the other fellows with whom one works in the shop and factory." In the study of 64 cases of Mennonites who have



gone to the army only 16 percent were farmers by occupation; 84 percent were engaged in non-farm occupations. In the reports of 535 Mennonite C. O.'s from five camps 53 percent were found to be farmers by occupation. I suspect that the percentage may really be ten to fifteen points higher.

Employment in defense industries breaks down the young Mennonite's convictions on the peace principle. One minister writes:

A number of these men (employed in defense industries) come from homes where the parents are loyal and devoted to the church, but they say, "Where else can I get a job?" Many of these men are on night shifts and sleep in the daytime, hence they seldom come to church.

Another minister writes:

Most of the young people find employment in the industries in the area, either in the factories or offices. They were employed there during normal peacetime conditions. Before we were in the war, and more intensively since that time, most of these factories were diverted into the making of war materials. When the draft came along they found themselves in a difficult position. They recognized the inconsistency of claiming exemption to serving in the army when they had been gainfully employed in the making of defense materials.

I have observed that the more completely a town or country community is Mennonite in constituency, the more likelihood the Mennonite group will have a high ratio of C.O.'s. Communities which are solidly Mennonite have the best record on the C.O. issue. Mennonites in mixed communities discover it more difficult to preserve the unity of their culture because of the competing influences of the non-peace groups. I believe that there is a direct correlation between the clannishness and solidarity and isolation of the Mennonite community and the maintenance of the C.O. stand. We may ask, does the preservation of the Mennonite heritage necessitate a return to community and cultural insularity?

Mennonites who live and work on the periphery of the Mennonite community, with many of their social and economic associations non-Mennonite, are often tempted to relax their Mennonitism. For example in a rural community such folk may be some distance from the church house. The children have few Mennonite associates. Not being in the heart of the Mennonite community, not being "in the thick of it" (as someone has described it) they are apart from the religious and social sanctions which impel maintenance of the

Mennonite faith.

Mennonites living and working in non-Mennonite communities away from home influences are less apt to seek the IV-E classification. Living apart from the social and religious controls of parents, church and community, the young men may face the impact of conscription alone and without home religious counsel. Of the cases studied only three C.O.'s were found to be working and living away from the home community. On the other hand, of the young Mennonites in the army 13 were away from home influence.

It has been suggested that the wider community surrounding the Mennonite community has its influence upon the draft decisions of Mennonite young men. If there is a ring of hostile eyes and intolerant voices surrounding the Mennonite settlements, the timid C.O. souls may seek shelter in non-combatant or regular army service. If the wider community is democratic and tolerant, as many American communities are, then this may lend encouragement to those taking the C.O. stand. However, persecution often fortifies the faith and tolerance weakens the faith.

Anti-C.O. spirit in a community among Mennonites and non-Mennonites may force some young men to abandon their C.O. stand. In its more sinister forms it takes on the nature of organized vigilante groups who go about threatening young men known to be C.O.'s. Case in point of this super-patriotism is Newton, Kansas. Another negative effect on the nonresistant position is the attitude of unsympathetic and severe draft boards. Through some of the coercive and arbitrary techniques employed by some draft boards, some less-courageous and less certain C.O.'s are frightened away from claiming or appealing for IV-E classification.

#### IV EDUCATION AND PERSONAL ASSOCIATIONS

We consider finally the environmental factor of education, of personal associations and several miscellaneous influences.

This is only a conjecture, but I wonder whether it is not true that in Mennonite circles there is a higher percentage of C.O.'s among those who go no further than the eighth grade than among the groups that attend high school and the groups that go to college. The boy who concludes his education with the eighth grade is the one who will return to the farm, will stay at home, will remain in the community, will not be subject to the secularizing influence of

the secondary schools, I have no statistical data as yet to support this observation, however. There is no doubt though that the modern high school is a secularizing agent, weaning young Mennonites away from the Mennonite mode of living. A host of secular, compromising influences rain down upon the youth when he steps into the high school. The pressure comes not so much from the teachers as from the fellow students who urge in many subtle ways conformity.

There seems to be a high mortality rate among young Mennonites who attend state and secular schools of higher learning. The reasons are many why they might forfeit the peace positions: they come from families which are perhaps disinterested in the church college; they are away from home; they have a new set of non-Mennonite associates; they are on the receiving end of several years of secular teaching. There are many exceptions though, for some have been strengthened in their pacifist convictions through study in a non-Mennonite academic institution. Young Mennonites who receive their training at a Mennonite college or academy will probably be devoted C.O.'s. Our Mennonite institutions of higher learning aid in preserving the peace testimony of the church. One minister writes:

Even though the home has made its contribution and the Church has faithfully carried out and presented its claims, I think the young person who, for the first time, is facing many of the problems of life seriously and rationally and whose ideals and ideas are often in flux, is most readily reached in college.

During this formative period, the Mennonite college can do much to mold the nonresistant thinking of the youth. However, even a Mennonite college opens up to a youth a number of diverting secular influences. He may learn the techniques of rationalizing his behavior. A final conclusion regarding education is that youths trained in non-Mennonite Bible institutes are often robbed of their appreciation for the Mennonite heritage—the nonresistant witness. We have information on the higher education of 36 noncombatants and regulars. Of the 36 who studied beyond high school, 20 attended state universities and colleges; 7 attended both state and Mennonite schools; 7 attended Mennonite institutions; 2 attended Bible institutes. Compare this with the 54 cases of C.O.'s who went on to college: 6 attended non-Mennonite institutions; 5 attended Bible institutes; 12 attended both Mennonite and non-Menno-

nite colleges; while 31 attended Mennonite colleges exclusively. There is need for a much more thorough study of this factor of higher education before we make any positive statements.

The principle of "follow the leader" has its sociological effect on the decisions of Mennonite youth. If the early draftees of the group, the church, the community go C.O., others who follow will be encouraged to go C.O. If many of the first assignees of the group choose military service, those who come after may be inclined to go regular. Especially is this true if the early assignees are leaders in their group, church, or community.

Young Mennonites with predominantly non-Mennonite friendships and associations are less inclined to be C.O.'s. If Mennonite youth seek their friendships outside of the Mennonite fellowship, they may have pressed upon them in a thousand subtle ways secular standards and ideals foreign to the Mennonites. Unconsciously they may be led to compromise certain of the ethical ideals of the Mennonites in order to establish support with their non-Mennonite friends. With the Mennonite young man accommodating himself to his non-Mennonite social set, along comes conscription and he feels the weight of conformity on the issue of military service. He wishes to continue to look well in the eyes of his gang. He cannot suddenly sever all group connections and stand forth heroically as a non-conformist to war. Forty cases of Mennonites entering military service reveal the following facts: 7 associated with Mennonites; 5 associated with both Mennonites and non-Mennonites; while 28 associated almost exclusively with non-Mennonites. Contrast this with the cases of 25 Mennonite C.O.'s: 4 associated with non-Mennonites principally; 2 associated with both Mennonites and Non-Mennonites; and 19 found their friendships largely among Mennonite youth.

There are a number of lesser factors which lead young Mennonites to enter the armed forces. Some individuals place a high premium on money and status, perhaps through the indirect conditioning of the home. They go to the army where there is money and preferment and position. However, not always is the financial consideration quite such a base type of motivation. The financial burden placed upon the C.O. causes some boys to choose non-combatant service even though they are essentially C.O. by conviction.

Some Mennonites have registered I-A or I-AO, rather than IV-E,

because they thought thereby they would have better chances with their local draft boards for deferment on the grounds of physical disability, dependency, or work of national importance. It must be admitted that young Mennonites who resorted to this method of escape from the draft do not represent the most devout and courageous strata of C.O.'s.

Finally, there are to be found occasionally Mennonite boys who are at heart conscientious objectors but who have felt that the present CPS program is an inadequate alternative to regular military or non-combatant service. As one young man has said, he wants no special privileges during time of war. He believes that he can make just as effective a witness for peace through non-combatant service.

## V THE CONCLUSION

Now in conclusion I wish to repeat that the generalizations of this paper are no more than tentative assumptions. Each generalization has its exceptions. I look forward to continuing this study—refining the techniques of investigation, probing aspect of the subject unexplored to date, making use of statistical data not yet available. I sense that this problem of environmental influences can be a very significant area of study. Through observation, statistical analysis, and interpretation, we may be able to gain a little keener insight of the factors necessary for the preservation and enrichment of our Mennonite nonresistant heritage.

A good barometer of the degree to which a group is keeping faith with the Mennonite heritage is its record of consistency on the principle of conscientious objection to war. A conclusion of my study is this that the factors requisite to the conservation of our peace testimony are the very same factors which serve to maintain and enrich our entire Mennonite culture—nonresistance, simple life, mutual aid, emphasis on New Testament orthodoxy. The influences damaging our nonresistant stand are the same factors which undermine our total Mennonite heritage. In its broader aspect this is a study of the factors essential to the preservation of the whole Mennonite way of life.

As a group the Mennonites may profit by the experience of this war. We are made aware of the areas of disintegration in our Mennonite culture. But through this tragedy, this crisis we are also rediscovering the Mennonite heritage.



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**A Summary Report of the First  
CONFERENCE FOR ADMINISTRATORS  
OF MENNONITE COLLEGES**

**held at  
Winona Lake, Indiana  
August 7 and 8, 1942**

**• • •**

**TO THE READER**

The following is a summary of the first conference held expressly for and by administrators of Mennonite Colleges to discuss ways and means in which cooperative action might be taken to deal with common problems. The primary purpose of the conference was to discuss immediate problems confronting the Mennonite colleges as a result of the war. In its attempt to make this an "all out war" the Federal Government tried to organize all American educational institutions to promote that end. This brought Mennonite colleges and other Historic Peace Church schools who attempted to adhere to their historic position of non-resistance and opposition to war, into an embarrassing situation and presented certain critical problems.

President Ernest Miller of Goshen College took the initiative to call this conference of Mennonite college administrators to discuss ways in which to face these problems. Seven colleges were represented. A spirit of honest inquiry, wholesome self-criticism and creative good-will characterized this first Mennonite college conference.

Only the program, the names and addresses of those who attended and the statement of position and proposals for action adopted by this conference will here be given. More detailed reports of the conference have been mimeographed and distributed.

**PROGRAM****MENNONITE COLLEGES IN WAR TIME**

**Forenoon Session** — 9:00 to 12:00 —Chairman, Ernest E. Miller,  
Goshen College

1. Implications of Non-resistance for the Program of the  
Mennonite College today

Dean Goertz, Bethel College

2. Changes and their Impact

(a) On the Activity and Religious Program of the College  
President Hostetter, Grantham College

(b) On the College's Educational Program  
Dean Schultz, Bluffton College

(c) On The Relation of the College to the Community  
President Unruh, Freeman Junior College

(d) On the Relation of the College to the Government  
Past-President Janzen, Tabor College

**NOTE:** (Twenty minutes will be allowed each speaker)

3. General Discussion

**Afternoon Session** — 1:30 to 4:00 — Chairman, L. L. Ramseyer,  
Bluffton College

1. Mennonite Colleges and our Civilian Public Service Program  
Orie Miller

2. Immediate Post-war Problems and the College Student  
Dr. Carl Kreider, Goshen College

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**MENNONITE COLLEGES AND WARTIME PROBLEMS**  
**A STATEMENT OF POSITION AND PROPOSALS FOR ACTION**

**Adopted by the Conference of Mennonite and Affiliated College**  
**Administrators, Winona Lake, Indiana, August 7, 1942**

Being by reason of our religious belief and our historic Mennonite convictions committed to the way of life taught and exemplified by Jesus as a way of love to all men and ministry to all human needs, and being accordingly conscientiously opposed to participation in war in any form as a violation of that way of life, we desire to set forth our common position

on the problems which face our colleges as a result of the war and the needs, both present and prospective, resulting from it.

1. We propose to continue a strong Christian educational program with emphasis on a type of general college education which will strengthen Christian faith and character and equip young people with a basic philosophy of life which will help them to meet successfully the problems that await them as they go out into the present and the post-war world, and prepare them to render an effective ministry to its needs.

2. We shall continue and strengthen our peace testimony within our schools and churches, and elsewhere as opportunity may afford.

3. We desire to promote among our faculty, students, and constituency positive service to our local communities, to the nation as a whole, and to the world in this time of great need. We pledge ourselves, accordingly, to promote the following forms of service:

- A. To recruit and prepare students and faculty for needed services which we can conscientiously perform; and to cultivate the spirit of sacrificial ministry to human needs.

- B. To promote giving to relief and reconstruction needs, particularly through the Mennonite Central Committee and its program.

- C. To encourage support of the Civilian Public Service Program provided by the government and operated by the Mennonite Central Committee.

- D. To support the sale of Civilian Bonds as made available by the government through the Mennonite Central Committee.

4. We find ourselves unable to accept from the government assignments which would commit us to participation in the war effort, since this would require us to violate our consciences and deny the faith and heritage of the churches which sponsor and support our colleges. Specifically this means inability to participate in the following federal programs:

- A. Recruiting and training men for any branch of the armed services as is required in the government's Enlisted Reserve program, under such plans as the Navy V-1, V-7, etc.



B. Promotion of the sale of war bonds or stamps.

C. Promotion of support of the war by any form of propaganda such as posters, chapel announcements, speakers, material in school publications, and the like.

5. At the same time we shall continue to cultivate a warm spirit of loyalty to our country, and a Christian patriotism which leads to devotion to the highest welfare of the land, and which we believe will lead to the finest possible contribution of our nation to the welfare of the entire world. We are devoted to the constitution, and the democratic traditions and institutions of our country, and shall continue to cultivate respect for and loyalty to our democratic heritage, and a desire to improve and strengthen it.

6. We propose to set up a training program for prospective workers in relief and reconstruction service, both at home and abroad, which can be offered to conscientious objectors who are willing to volunteer for service, provided arrangements can be made with Selective Service whereby men in such training can be assigned to such service either before or after induction into Civilian Public Service.

7. We appreciate the freedom of conscience vouchsafed us by our government, and we suggest that each college make its position known to its students and constituency, and to the government agencies involved, with a view to better understanding and greater appreciation of our position, in order that good relations with the government and our communities may be maintained, and our peace testimony as well as our general witness may be more effective.

8. We anticipate that the position we are taking may bring heavier burdens upon our colleges, than in peace time, and therefore solicit from our churches increased support in counsel, in finance, and in prayer, that we may continue to serve well our young people and our churches, and may increase rather than reduce our usefulness.

### **ACTION**

It was moved and passed that we authorize the creation of a committee of representatives of all Mennonite Colleges desiring to participate in the civilian service training program, whose duty it shall be to formulate more specific plans to present to the colleges; and that we instruct this committee to work with and through the Mennonite Central Committee and the National Service Board for Religious Objectors in arranging for the Program. This Committee shall be known as **The Committee for Civilian Service Training in Mennonite Colleges.**

### PARTICIPATING COLLEGES

BETHEL COLLEGE	E. G. Kaufman, President
North Newton, Kansas	P. S. Goertz, Dean
BLUFFTON COLLEGE	L. L. Ramseyer, President
Bluffton, Ohio	J. S. Schultz, Dean
FREEMAN JUNIOR COLLEGE	J. D. Unruh, President
Freeman, S. Dakota	B. P. Waltner, Dean
GOSHEN COLLEGE	E. E. Miller, President
Goshen, Indiana	H. S. Bender, Dean
HESSTON COLLEGE	Milo Kauffman, President
Hesston, Kansas	J. H. Koppenhaver, Personnel Director
TABOR COLLEGE	P. E. Schellenberg, Acting Pres.
Hillsboro, Kansas	A. E. Janzen, Past President
MESSIAH BIBLE COLLEGE	C. N. Hostetter, Jr., President
Grantham, Pa.	Jacob Kuhns, Personnel Director

### ATTENDANCE AT THE CONFERENCE FOR ADMINISTRATORS OF MENNONITE COLLEGES

Dean Harold S. Bender, -----	Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana
Paul Bender, Registrar, -----	Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana
John Coppenhaver, -----	Hesston College, Hesston, Kansas
Henry A. Fast -----	Newton, Kansas
J. Winfield Fretz, -----	North Newton, Kansas
Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Gaeddert, --	C.P.S. Camp No. 5, Colorado
Melvin Gingerich, -----	Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas
Erwin C. Goering, ----	C.P.S. Camp No. 25, Weeping Water, Neb.
Dean P. S. Goertz, -----	Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas
Sam W. Goossen, -----	Bakersfield, California
Pres. C. N. Hostetter, Messiah Bible College, Grantham, Penns.	
President A. E. Janzen -----	Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kansas
President Ed. G. Kaufman, --	Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.
Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Krahn, ----	Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kan.
Carl Kreider, -----	Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana
Carl Landis, -----	Merem, Indiana
Mr. and Mrs. Russell A. Lantz, --	Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio
Quintus Leatherman	
M. C. Lehman, -----	Akron, Pennsylvania
D. D. Miller, -----	Middlebury, Indiana
President Ernest E. Miller, ----	Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana
Orie O. Miller, -----	Akron, Pennsylvania
Paul Mininger, -----	Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana
John H. Mosemann, -----	C.P.S. Camp No. 4, Grottoes, Vir.
S. F. Pannabecker, -----	Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio
President Lloyd L. Ramseyer, --	Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio
Hans. E. Regier, -----	Whitewater, Kansas
Dean J. S. Schultz, -----	Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio
Mr. and Mrs. C. Henry Smith, --	Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio
Grant M. Stoltzfus, -----	C.P.S. Camp No. 24, Hagerstown, Md.
Mr. and Mrs. John Umble -----	Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana
Pres. J. D. Unruh, ----	Freeman Junior College, Freeman, S. D.
Benj. P. Waltner, ----	Freeman Junior College, Freeman, S. D.

**PROGRAM OF**  
**CONFERENCE ON MENNONITE SOCIOLOGY**  
 YMCA Hotel, 826 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill., Dec. 31, 1941

**AFTERNOON SESSION**

- 1:45-2:00 Opening Devotional Exercises Led by John Warkentin
- 2:00-2:15 "The Purpose of the Conference," Statement by the Chairman, Winfield Fretz
- 2:15-3:15 "The Sociological and Economic Significance of the Mennonites as a Cultural Group in History," Ernst Correll, American University

3:30-5:15 **SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS CONFRONTING MENNONITES TODAY** (Four Fifteen-Minute Addresses)

1. "Rural Life Problems and the Mennonites," Melvin Gingerich, Bethel College
2. "Problems Confronting Mennonite Youth," Felix Schrag, Chicago
3. "Ethical Dilemmas of Mennonites in Industry," Guy Hershberger, Goshen College
4. "Secularization among the Mennonites," Karl Baehr, Chicago

Open Discussion

5:30-6:45 **DINNER MEETING**

"Fruitful Areas of Research in Mennonite History and Sociology," C. Henry Smith, Bluffton College

Open Discussion

7:00-8:30 **SOCIOLOGICAL RESOURCES AND SUGGESTIONS FROM MENNONITE HISTORY** (Four Fifteen-Minute Addresses)

1. "Co-operative Efforts among Russian Mennonites after 1917," Cornelius F. Klassen, Winnipeg, Manitoba
2. "Mennonite Community Life in Russia," Cornelius Krahn, Tabor College
3. "Lessons from the Mennonite Colonies in Paraguay," Harold Bender, Goshen College

4. "The Significance of Mutual Aid for Mennonite Communities," Winfield Fretz, Bethel College

Open Discussion

8:30-10:00 THE FUNCTION OF MENNONITE COLLEGES IN SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE MENNONITE CHURCH (Panel Discussion by Six College Presidents)

Bethel College, Ed. G. Kaufman  
Bluffton College, Lloyd Ramseyer  
Goshen College, Ernest Miller  
Freeman College, John Urnuh\*  
Hesston College, Milo Kaufman\*  
Tabor College, A. E. Janzen

10:00-10:15 A FUTURE CONFERENCE ON MENNONITE SOCIOLOGICAL PROBLEMS: DISCUSSION

\*These men were not present at this conference.

REGISTER OF ATTENDANCE  
AT THE CONFERENCE ON MENNONITE SOCIOLOGY

Amstutz, Dr. Clair H.	-----	Goshen, Indiana
Baehr, Mr. Karl	----- 5802 Maryland Ave.,	Chicago, Illinois
Bauman, Dr. Irwin W.	-----	Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio
Bender, Dean Harold S.	-----	Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana
Bender, Dr. Paul	-----	Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana
Bennett, Mr. Ernest	-----	Akron, Pennsylvania
Burkhart, Mr. I. E.	-----	Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana
Byler, Mrs. J. N.	-----	Akron, Pennsylvania
Fretz, Dr. J. Winfield,	----- 5802 Maryland Ave.,	Chicago, Illinois
Friedman, Dr. Robert	-----	Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana
Gaeddert, Mr. Albert	----- C.P.S. Camp,	Colorado Springs, Colorado
Gingerich, Dr. and Mrs. Melvin	-----	Bethel College, N. Newton, Kan.
Habegger, Mr. and Mrs. Mardin	----- 720 W. St.,	Chicago, Illinois
Hartzler, Mr. Levi	-----	Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana
Hershberger, Dr. Guy	-----	Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana
Hostetler, Miss Avis	-----	Harper, Kansas
Janzen, Mr. A. E.	-----	Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kansas
Kaufman, Dr. Ed. G.	-----	Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas
King, Miss Edith	----- 5721 S. Maryland Ave.,	Chicago, Illinois
King, Mr. Frank	----- 5721 S. Maryland Ave.,	Chicago, Illinois
King, Mr. Harold	----- 5721 S. Maryland Ave.,	Chicago, Illinois
Krahn, Dr. Cornelius	-----	Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kansas
Kreider, Rev. A. E.	-----	Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas
Kreider, Dr. Carl	-----	Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana
Meyer, Dr. J. C.	-----	Sterling, Ohio
Miller, Dr. Ernest	-----	Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana
Miller, Dr. Glen R.	-----	Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana
Miller, Mr. Orie O.	-----	Akron, Pennsylvania
Moser, Mr. and Mrs. Rollin	-----	Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio
Neufeld, Rev. John T.	----- 4321 S. Rockwell St.,	Chicago, Illinois

Quiring, Mr. and Mrs. J. J. ---- 677 N. St. Clair St., Chicago, Ill.  
Ramseyer, Dr. Lloyd ----- Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio  
Rediger, Rev. C. E. ----- 1300 W. 72nd St., Chicago, Illinois  
Schrage, Mr. Felix J. ----- 5802 Maryland Ave., Chicago, Illinois  
Schultz, Mr. Peter G. -- 9306 Richmond Ave., Evergreen Park, Ill.  
Smith, Dr. C. Henry ----- Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio  
Smith, Dr. Willard H. ----- Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana  
Smucker, Mr. Don E. ----- 740 N. Rush St., Chicago, Illinois  
Stoltzfus, Mr. and Mrs. Grant ----- Akron, Pennsylvania  
Tripp, Dr. and Mrs. Myron ---- Taylor University, Upland, Ind.  
Warkentin, Dr. A. ----- Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas  
Warkentin, Dr. and Mrs. John -- 228 E. Huron Ave., Chicago, Ill.





